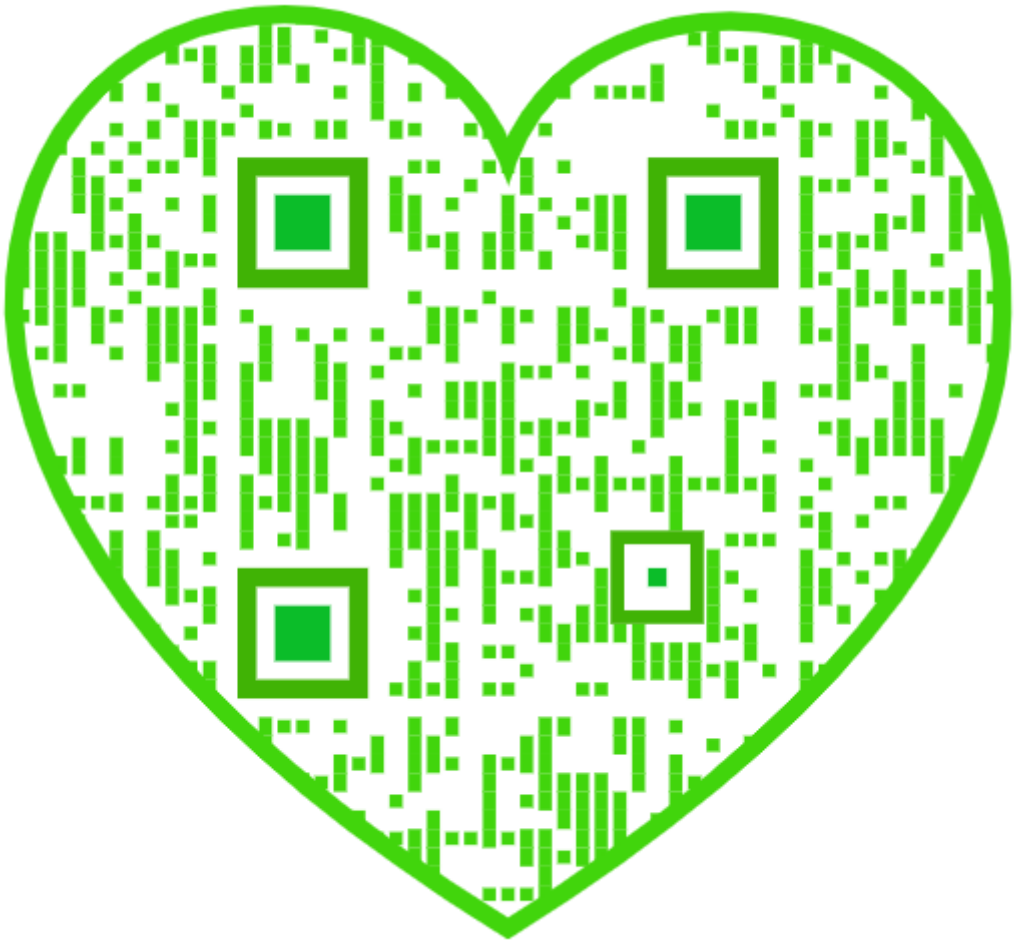
Five-Minute Talks

REV. RICHARD NEWTON D.D.



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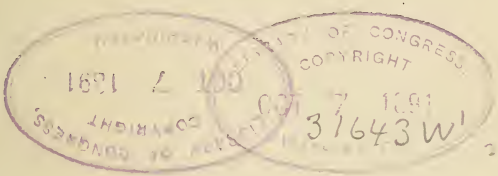
FIVE-MINUTE TALKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE;

OR,

THE WAY TO SUCCESS.

BY THE LATE

REV. RICHARD NEWTON, D.D.



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PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

THESE "Talks" have been selected from many valuable articles of the late Dr. Richard Newton written for *The Youth's World* and other periodicals of the American Sunday-School Union. They are written in that earnest, happy vein which was characteristic of the author, charming the reader by their sparkling simplicity, and captivating him by practical sense and great wisdom, enforced by the most apt and striking illustrations. Young persons are ever puzzling over the daily questions of life and how to succeed in the world; and no recent writer has shown the skill to guide and help them better than Dr. Newton.

It is only proper to add that he gave to the writer of this note permission and full authority to issue in a book any of his articles written for the periodicals of the Sunday-School Union. These from among his ripest thoughts written for persons in every walk of life cannot fail to interest a wide circle of readers. E. W. R.

PHILADELPHIA, Sept. 1, 1891.

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CHAPTER I.

LOOKING AHEAD.

WHEN we stand on the top of a hill that overlooks a broad and beautiful landscape, it is an interesting thing to look carefully at the different objects that are there before us. If we have a good glass to look through, as the little girl has, it will be a great help to us. We can see further and clearer with the glass than without it. We cannot tell where this girl is standing, or at what she is looking; but the sight of this picture may well remind us of what we ought to do at the beginning of every year of our life.

When a birthday comes, it seems to set us down on the top of a hill; and the year on which we are then entering is like a landscape that opens out before us. Every new year that we enter on is like the beginning of a new journey, or the opening of another chapter in our lives; and as we look at this little girl, earnestly gazing at something that interests her, we may well learn a lesson from her.

It is the lesson of *looking ahead*. I do not mean

that we should give way to the foolish and sinful feeling that some people have, when they go to what are called "fortune-tellers." This is a wicked thing to do. The people who profess to do thus, put themselves in the place of God, and pretend to tell what will happen to particular persons, to-morrow, or next week, or next month. This is what none but God can do. This is not what we mean by *looking ahead.*

The lesson suggested by this little girl may lead us to speak a little about *three* things connected with *looking ahead.* One of these refers to *what we can see* when we look ahead. Another refers to *what we cannot see* in looking ahead. The third refers to *what we need* in starting ahead.

1. *What we can see when we look ahead.*

We can see spring and summer and autumn and winter this year, the same as in other years. We can see storms sweeping over land and sea; ship-wrecks and railroad accidents we know will take place; fires will break out in different places, and burn up houses and property; children will be sick with croup, measles and scarlet-fever; grown people will be sick, too, with diseases of different kinds; about the same number of people will die the coming year that have died in other years. It is reckoned that *sixty* people die every minute; and so every time the clock ticks throughout the coming year somebody will be dying. And then

births will continue to take place a little faster than deaths; oftener than the clock ticks, a baby will be born somewhere or other.

The same sort of *evil* things will happen the coming year that have happened in other years. Men will cheat, and lie, and swear, and rob, and murder, and be put in prison, and be hung.

And the same sort of *good things* will happen in time to come that have happened before. Ministers will preach, and teachers will tell about Jesus, and Sunday scholars will seek Jesus, and get new hearts, and be made happy and useful. These are some of the things we *can* see when we look ahead.

2. *Things we cannot see, as we look ahead.*

We cannot tell who of us are to be sick or who are to die within a year. As the Apostle James says, "Ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow." Some may lose their brothers and sisters; some may lose dear friends and loving parents before this year is over. But no one can tell to whom these things will happen. We cannot see what changes may take place, or what trials may come upon us within a year; and if this is so, then we may well think of

3. *What we need in starting ahead.*

We shall have duties to do, and we shall need *strength* to do them. We shall have dangers to meet, and we shall need *protection* from those dan-

gers. Sometimes we shall not know what is the right thing to do, and we shall need *guidance* to lead us in the right way. At other times we shall be in trouble, and shall need some one to *comfort* us. We need some friend who can always be with us, and who can give us these four—*strength*, and *protection*, and *guidance*, and *comfort*. But Jesus, our beloved Saviour, is the only one who can give us all these things. If we seek him as our Friend, he will always be with us, and will give us all that we may need. We have a good looking-ahead text in Isaiah 33 : 2 ; it is this :—"*Be thou their arm every morning.*" Every morning let us pray that God will be our "*arm.*" If we take hold of this "arm" and lean on it, we shall find in it the four things that we have been speaking of. It will give us all the strength, and protection, and guidance, and comfort that we may need. And if we have these "every morning," then we will certainly have a happy time, *Looking Ahead.*

CHAPTER II.

A MEMBER OF THE "TRY COMPANY."

THIS little fellow, we can see at a glance, is trying hard to learn to write. And if he only keeps on trying he will be sure to succeed.

Some time ago a gentleman was traveling in a railway car. In the seat before him was a boy who had a parcel on his knee. The parcel was tied up with a string, which the boy was trying to untie. The knot was a tight one. After watching the boy for a while, the gentleman put his hand in his pocket, and took out his penknife. Opening the knife he said, "Here, my friend, let me cut the string for you. I don't think you can untie that knot."

The boy looked up at him with a smile and said, "Thank you, sir. But I belong to the 'Try Company.' My father tells me, when I begin to do anything, always to keep on trying till I do it." Then he went on working away at the knot, till at last he got it untied.

Now the "Try Company" is a very good company to join. I would like all my young friends

to join it. I wish to speak of two things for which trying is useful. And these make two good reasons for joining this company.

1. We ought to join this company, for one thing, because *trying is useful in getting good for ourselves.* If we could follow the history of the boy in our picture, no doubt we should get a good illustration of this part of our subject. We cannot do this. But here is an illustration of the same kind which I know to be true.

A gentleman was on the school committee in a little town in New England. One day he visited the school, as it was his duty to do. It happened to be the time when the scholars were engaged with their writing lessons. He went around from desk to desk examining the copy-books. Some of them were very nicely written, while others were not so well done. At length he came to the desk of one little fellow who was the poorest writer in the school. When the other scholars saw the gentleman look at this boy's book, they knew what ugly scrawls he would see there, and they laughed. This made the boy feel so badly that he covered his face with his hands and burst into tears.

The gentleman felt sorry for the boy, and patting him kindly on the shoulder he asked, "What is your name, my little man?"

"My name is Charley, sir," said the boy.

"Charley, lend me your pen a minute," said the

visitor. He took the pen, and sat down and wrote his own name on the copy-book, in a nice, large, round hand. Then he said, "Now, Charley, look at that. I remember when I couldn't write a bit better than you do. But I made up my mind to try to be a good writer. And you see how well I succeeded. Don't be discouraged, Charley. Try, and *keep on trying*, and you'll get to be one of the best writers in the school."

About twenty years or more afterwards this gentleman was attending a public meeting in a western town. At the close of the meeting a gentleman came up and shook him warmly by the hand, saying, "You don't remember me, sir, do you?" "No, I do not." "Well, sir, do you remember, years ago, visiting the school in such a town, and writing your name on the copy-book of a boy named Charley, and telling him that, if he tried, he might become the best writer in the school?" "Yes, I remember that." "Well, sir, I am Charley. I took your advice. I did try. I became one of the best writers in that school. I am the governor of this state now. And I owe it all to the lesson of trying which you taught me on that day." This shows us how useful trying is in getting good for ourselves.

2. But there is another reason for joining this company, and that is, *trying is useful in doing good to others.* It would be easy enough to fill a vol-

ume with illustrations of this part of our subject. But I make room for one.

More than a hundred years ago Robert Raikes was going through the streets of Gloucester, England, one Sabbath day. He saw crowds of young people seeking to amuse themselves, without any thought of God, of their souls, or of eternity. The thought came into his mind how much good might be done if these young people could be gathered together and taught the word of God. Then the question arose, "Why should it not be?" And then he said to himself, "*I'll try.*" He did try. *That* was the beginning of the modern system of the great work of Sunday-school instruction. This work has gone round the world. It has carried the blessings of life and peace, of comfort and salvation, to uncounted numbers of homes and hearts.

Then let us all join the "Try Company," for these two good reasons: because trying is useful *in getting good for ourselves;* and *in doing good to others.*

CHAPTER III.

THE SUNSHINY SHOEMAKER.

THE shoemaker in this picture is occupying a lowly position. His business is to sit on that humble bench, in that little shop, and make or mend shoes. But his position is an honest and useful one, and this makes it honorable. *All honest work is honorable.* Our friend in the picture looks as though he felt that he was honorably engaged. What a bright and cheerful face he has! He looks as though he might have been the man of whom a good story is told. Some one asked him the question, "Have you got much religion?" His reply was, "Just enough to help me make and mend shoes well."

The catechism of the Episcopal Church teaches that one important part of our work as Christians is "*to do our duty in that state of life in which it has pleased God to call us.*" I know not whether the shoemaker here represented was a Presbyterian, or a Methodist, or a Baptist, or an Episcopalian. But it makes little difference, if he was only a

good Christian. He looks like a cheerful, sunshiny Christian.

There are three good reasons why all Christians should be cheerful and sunshiny.

1. One reason is, that they have *good company.* God our Saviour goes with us wherever we are. He said to Jacob at Bethel, "I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of" (Gen. 28 : 15). He says to each of us, "Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee" (Isa. 41 : 10). And the apostle tells us, that "truly our fellowship," or companionship, "*is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 1 : 3). There is no better company than this for any one to have. And if we are Christians, the thought of having such good company may well make us cheerful and sunshiny. This was just what good John Newton felt when speaking of the presence of Jesus; he said :

> "While blest with a sense of his love,
> A palace a toy would appear;
> And prisons would palaces prove,
> If Jesus would dwell with me there."

2. But Christians ought to be cheerful and sunshiny, because they have not only good company, but also *a good supply.*

If you and I had to go on a journey for two or three days, and knew not where we could get anything to eat or drink till we came back, we

could not be very cheerful. But if we had a large basket with us, full of all kinds of nice provisions, then we might well be cheerful.

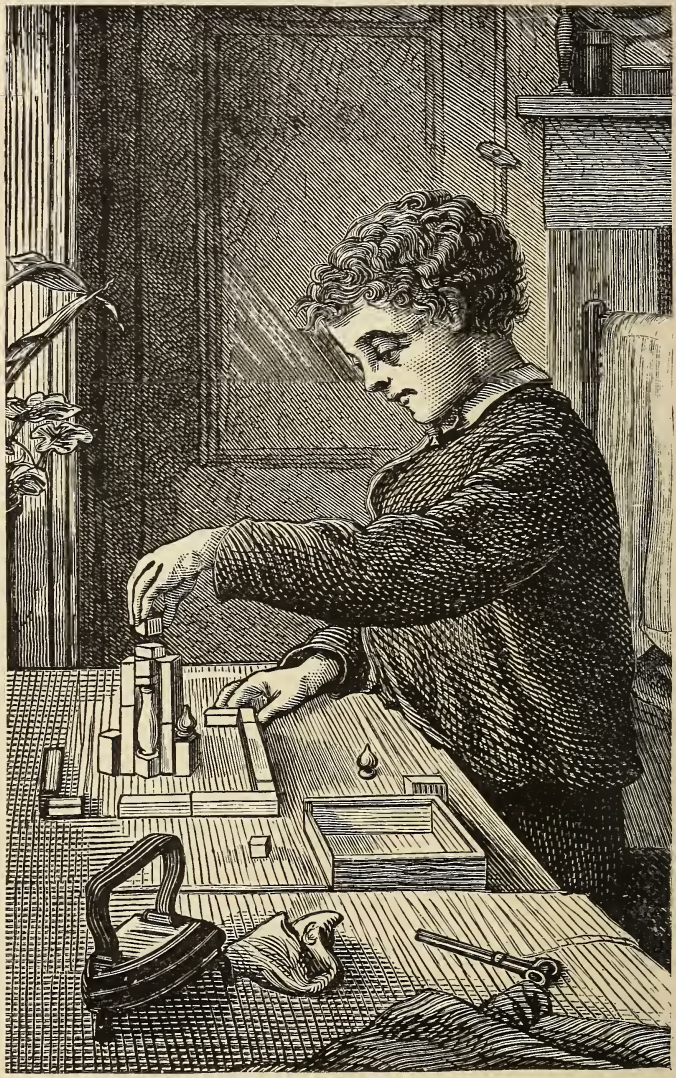
Now, just look at one of the sweet promises God gives us when we begin to serve him. It is written in Phil. 4: 19, and reads thus: "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." This is like a big basket filled with everything that we can need on our way to heaven. In the 84th Psalm the Psalmist tells us about some of the good things that are in this basket. He mentions *water* to drink, and *strength* to walk and work with, and a *shield* to protect us, and a *sun* to give us light, and *grace* to give us comfort, and *glory* to give us encouragement. Here are *seven* good things mentioned as *in* this basket; and then we are told that "no good thing" *is left out of it* (Ps. 84: 11). Surely this is a good supply; and those who have it ought to be cheerful.

3. And then there is another thing that should help to make us cheerful and sunshiny if we are trying to serve God: we not only have good company and a good supply, but also *a good prospect.*

If a boy is playing truant, and knows that when he gets home at night there is a flogging awaiting him, he has a bad prospect before him. That is enough to make him feel uncomfortable all day. But if a boy is doing an errand for his

father, and is doing it well; if he knows that when he gets home at night his father's approving words, "Well done," and his loving kiss are awaiting him—this may well help to make him happy and cheerful all the day.

And this is just our case if we are trying to love and serve the blessed Saviour. When we die and go home to him, his loving words to each of us will be, "Well done, good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." This is a *good prospect* to have before us. And this should help to make us cheerful and sunshiny. David was looking both at the *supply* for the way in which he was walking, and at the *prospect* at the end of that way, when he said, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Ps. 23 : 6). And if we have these three good things: *good company*, a *good supply*, and a *good prospect*, we ought to be cheerful and sunshiny.



CHAPTER IV.

THE GOOD BUILDER.

HERE is a boy who is busy with his building blocks. We may well feel an interest in this kind of work, because we all have something to do with building. I do not mean to say that we shall all be carpenters or masons; but I mean that we all have a character to make of one kind or other: either a good character or a bad one. This character may be compared to a building, and we in making it may well be called builders. We are good builders, or bad builders, according to the kind of building we are putting up. We find the matter thus spoken of in the Bible. This is what the apostle Jude means, in the twentieth verse of his short epistle, when he says, "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith." When we are learning to form good habits, and do what is right, we are making a good character; and this, like a building, is growing broader, and higher, and more beautiful. But if we are doing wrong things, then we are making a

bad character, and our building is becoming ill-shaped and ugly.

Now, if we wish to be good builders, or, as Paul says, "wise master builders," and make for ourselves a good character, there are *three* things we must be sure to get.

1. In the *first* place we must have *a good plan.* If we should see a man begin to build a church or a house without first having a plan of the building drawn, we should think he was very foolish. Before beginning to put up a building of any kind, a wise man will always have a plan of it drawn. This plan will show how wide, how long, how high the building is to be; how many rooms there are to be in it, how many doors and windows there are to be, and where each of them is to be placed. It is impossible to make a building of any kind that will be satisfactory, without a good plan.

And it is just the same when we begin the building up of our characters. We must have a good plan. And when we get this plan we must be careful to follow it, and make our own characters just like it. We must look to the Bible for this plan. Here we find it in the life and character of our blessed Saviour. He came down from heaven to show us how to be good builders, "*Leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps.*" And if we try to "tread in the blessed steps of his

most holy life;" to say and do what he would be likely to say and do, if he were in our place—then we shall be copying his example, or following the plan he has left us, and we certainly shall be good builders.

2. But the second thing we must have, if we would be successful in this sort of building, is *a good foundation.*

Our Saviour taught us, in one of his beautiful parables, that if a man should build his house on the sand without a foundation, it would show that he was a foolish man. For, in the time of trial, when the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, it fell. But a house that had its foundation on a rock would stand safely in the time of trial, and this would prove that the builder was a wise man.

And when we are building a character, a good foundation is just as important as when we are building a house. And if we look into the Bible, it is easy to find out the rock on which we must build if we want to make a good character. The apostle Paul shows us this when he says, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3 : 11). But you may ask, How can Christ be our foundation? What is meant by building up our characters on him? It means that we must trust him for the pardon of our sins, and for our right to enter heaven.

The hymn says, "Trusting Jesus, that is all;" and this is true. For when we are hoping to be saved, not for anything good in ourselves, but for what Jesus has done for us, then it may well be said that we are building on him.

3. And then there is one other thing that we must have if we would be successful in this kind of building, and this is *good materials.*

The apostle speaks of some persons using "wood, hay, stubble" in making a building. It would be impossible to have a good building by using such materials as these. But then he speaks of other persons who work with "gold, silver, precious stones." These are good materials. They would make a splendid building.

If we are only loving ourselves, and trying to please ourselves, then all that we can do in building up our characters will be like the "wood, hay, stubble" of which the apostle speaks (1 Cor. 3: 12). These are bad materials, and the building made in using them must be a bad building. But if we learn to love the blessed Saviour, and try to please him, *this* will turn all that we do into "gold, silver, precious stones."

Then let us all try to get these three things: this *good plan*, this *good foundation*, and these *good materials*, and so we shall be *good builders.*

CHAPTER V.

THE BLIND MAN AND HIS LESSONS.

WHAT a sad sight it is to see a blind man! How sorrowful to think of all he misses! He never can see the bright sun shining in his beauty. He never can see the green fields, or the waving grain, or the running brooks, or the beautiful flowers, or the swelling hills, or the great mountains, or the blue sky that God has made. He never can see the silvery moon as she walks forth in her loveliness, nor the twinkling stars as they shine in the heavens by night.

He never can look upon the faces of those who love him; never see the light that kindles in their eyes, or the sweet smiles that play over their countenances, just as the sunshine plays over the landscape. And then he never can walk with comfort or confidence, but is obliged to move slowly and carefully, feeling his way along step by step. And yet, when we look thoughtfully at a poor blind man, like the one in our picture, it may very well teach us some good lessons. Let us look for a moment at some of these.

1. One lesson that the sight of such a blind man may teach us is the lesson of *pity*.

How many comforts and blessings we have which the blind man can never share! This should make us feel very loving and tender towards him, and should lead us to try to help him and comfort him all we can. This is just what the two little girls in our picture are doing. They look as though they were pitying the poor man; and one of them is dropping a piece of money into the little basket which the blind man's dog is holding in his mouth. We should feel pity for the blind when we see them.

2. Another lesson which the sight of the blind man should teach us is the lesson of *gratitude*.

When we have things every day and all the time, we are very apt to forget how valuable they are, and how much we owe to God for giving them to us. People who have never been sick can hardly understand what a blessing it is to be well. If we have never had the headache, or the earache, we do not know how to be properly thankful for heads and ears that do not ache. And so with our eyes. We open them every morning, and use them all the day, and it is hard for us to feel grateful as we should, for the power to use our eyes so freely. But suppose an unseen hand should fasten a bandage over our eyes, a bandage we had no power to remove, in the midst of our day's work or our

day's play; how dreadful it would be! We could not read; we could not work; we could not walk; we could not play; our one constant cry would be, "Oh, take it off! take it off!" And when at last it was taken off, how grateful we should feel for the use of our eyes! And this is one lesson the sight of a blind man should teach us. It should make us grateful for the use of our eyes.

3. And then there is one other lesson the sight of a blind man may teach us, and this is the lesson of *hope.*

God has told us that the time is coming when "the eyes of the blind shall be opened" (Isa. 35: 5). Jesus opened the eyes of the blind when he was on earth. But he did not open the eyes of *all* the blind. There were only a few blind men whom he thus blessed. Multitudes of them were left to grope their way in darkness. *Their* eyes were not opened. But the promise of Isaiah, spoken of above, refers to *all* the blind. I suppose this promise refers to heaven. *There will be no blind people in heaven!* The prophet Isaiah gives us another sweet promise, that we know refers to heaven. He says in one place, "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty" (Isa. 33: 17). This will be true of all who go to heaven. How many beautiful things there will be for us to see in heaven! How beautiful the golden streets of that heavenly city will be! And the pearly gates, and

the jewelled walls, and the glorious angels will all be very beautiful. But the most blessed and beautiful thing about heaven will be, that there we shall *see Jesus.* As he said in his wonderful prayer, we shall be with him where he is, that we may *behold his glory* (John 17 : 24). Beholding his glory, and seeing him in his beauty, both mean the same thing. And this is what we shall all see in heaven, if we love and serve Jesus. And so, when we see a blind man, these are the lessons the sight should teach us : a lesson of *pity,* a lesson of *gratitude,* a lesson of *hope.*

C.J.WALKER

CHAPTER VI.

THE LITTLE GIRL AND HER PET.

WHAT a pretty picture this is! Here we see a good-natured, pleasant-looking little girl. She is sitting on a rug with her pet kitten in her lap. The little girl looks pleased, and pussy looks pleased too. We see one of pussy's paws resting gently on the little girl's left arm. Pussy seems well satisfied with her little mistress, and the place she occupies on her lap. As we look at her, we can almost fancy that we hear the low purring noise that cats are accustomed to make when they are pleased. Hidden away in that paw, that rests so gently there, are sharp ugly claws, that could tear the skin from that arm in a minute, and make the blood come. But when pussy is treated gently and kindly, she finds no use for those claws, and so they do not appear.

1. *The lesson of gentleness.*—This is a lesson we should all try to learn and practice. It is the lesson that Jesus was speaking of when he said, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart"

(Matt. xi. 29). He meant by this to say that he is gentle, and that he wants us all to be like him. And this is the view of our Saviour's character that we are taught to think of when we offer to him that sweet prayer, written for the little ones, which begins,

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,
Look upon a little child."

2. *Gentleness is a very pleasant thing*, and this is a good reason why we should learn this lesson.

When we go into the woods in summer time, and see the nice soft velvety moss growing over the rocks, how pleasant it is to sit down on that moss! It would be very disagreeable to sit on the rough, hard rock if it were not for the moss that covers it. But this grows over the hard rock, and makes a pleasant seat for us. And gentleness in our homes is just as pleasant a thing as the moss is in the woods. It covers up the rough, sharp points of ill-temper, and makes every one feel comfortable.

"Mother," said little Nanny one day, "sometimes pussy has paws and sometimes she has claws; isn't that funny? She pats with her paws and plays prettily, but she scratches with her claws, and then I don't like her. I wish she had no claws, but only soft little paws. Then she would never scratch, but would always be nice and gentle."

"Well, Nanny dear," said her mother, "remem-

ber that you are very much like pussy. Those little hands, so soft and tender, when well employed, are like pussy's paws, very pleasant to feel. But when they pinch, or scratch, or strike in anger, then they are like pussy's claws."

"Well, that's funny enough, mother; I never thought I was so much like pussy."

"You love pussy very much," said her mother, "and you may learn a good lesson from her. When you think kind thoughts, and speak gentle, loving words, then you are like pussy with her nice soft paws, and everybody will love you. But when you think bad thoughts, or give way to ugly tempers, and speak cross and angry words, then you are like pussy with her sharp, scratching claws, and nobody will love you."

Nice soft paws are much pleasanter than sharp, tearing claws. And so gentleness is much better than anger or wrath, and this is a good reason why we should learn the lesson of gentleness.

An old gentleman remarkable for his gentleness, was asked once how he had learned to be so gentle. He said it was "*by praying to God and speaking low.*" Let us try to learn this lesson in the same way. Remember the closing words of Dr. Watt's sweet hymn,

"Let love through all your actions run,
Let all your words be mild;
Live like the blessed Virgin's Son,
That sweet and gentle child."

CHAPTER VII.

"I WANT SOME MORE!"

THIS is what the little girl in the picture seems to be saying. You can see in a moment that she has a good appetite. She has eaten up what was first given to her. How nicely she has cleaned off her plate! And as we look at her we almost hear her say, "I want some more, please!" And this is what we all have to say every day. When we use the Lord's prayer, and say, "Give us this day our daily bread," we are asking our Father in heaven for more. And as we stop and look at this picture, we may fancy that it speaks to us about *three* things.

1. One is this, *how much we need!*

When we wake in the morning how soon we feel hungry, and need something to eat! We get our breakfast and go to school. We come home at noon feeling hungry again, and like the little girl in the picture, each of us is ready to say, "I want some more, please!" We eat our dinner and go to work, or to walk, or to play during the

afternoon; and by the time evening comes we are hungry again, and "more, please," just tells what our feeling is. After supper we are tired and need rest. And this is the history, not of *one* day only, but of *every* day of our lives. We are thirsty, and we need drink. We are hungry, and we need food. We are tired, and need rest. Our clothes wear out, and we need new ones. What multitudes of people, like the little girl in our picture, are ready to say every day, and many times a day, "We want more." More food, more drink, more clothes, more rest, and more of other things are needed constantly. And when we think of all this, we may well say, How much we need!

2. And then, as we look at this picture again, another thing it seems to say to us is *how much God gives!*

The food we eat when we are hungry, God gives us. The water we drink when thirsty, God gives us. The clothes we put on when naked, God gives us. The rest we take when weary, and the fuel we use to warm us when cold, God gives us. And not to *us* only, but to *all*, God gives these things. He gives them to the rich, as well as to the poor; to kings and princes, as well as to beggars. Yes, and God is giving such things to other creatures as well as to ourselves. To the birds of the air, to the beasts of the field, and to the fishes of the sea, he gives everything they need. David is speaking

of all these things when he says: "Thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good" (Ps. 104: 28). And Paul says, "He giveth to all life, and breath, and all things" (Acts 17: 25). What a wonderful giver God is! He never stops giving, any more than the sun stops shining. When we want more, he always has more to give. Whatever we need either for our souls or bodies, he is ready to give. We go to him many times a day, and he supplies all our need. When we think of all that God is giving us continually, how well we may say in the language of the hymn:

"More and more, more and more,
Always more to follow;
Oh, his matchless, boundless love!
Still there's more to follow."

3. When we remember *how much we need*, and *how much God gives*, it may well remind us, *how much we owe to God.*

And there are two ways in which we may pay God what we owe him. One of these is *with our lips.* In this way we can give him thanks and praise. This was what David meant when he said, "My mouth shall praise *thee* with joyful lips" (Ps. 63: 5). This is what our lips and tongues were made for. It is right to say "thank you" to our friends for any favor they do us, however small. Then how much more should we "Praise God from

whom *all blessings* flow!" But then, we should thank him by our *lives*, as well as by our lips. And we do this when we learn to give to others, because God gives to us. And till God stops giving to us, we never should stop giving to others.

Let us take our last look at the picture, and think of these three things: *how much we need, how much God gives*, and *how much we owe to him.*

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BEST JEWEL.

HOW many different kinds of jewels there are! There is the pearl, the topaz, the ruby, the sapphire, the diamond, and many others. But which is the best jewel? A child, in the arms of a Christian mother or sister, is a jewel with which none other can compare. This is the best jewel.

A Roman lady had once been showing her beautiful jewels to another lady. When she got through she asked to see her friend's jewels. This friend was a mother. She had two fine boys. Pointing to them as they entered the room, she said, "*These are my jewels.*" This was true. It was a noble answer even for a heathen mother to give. But it is a nobler answer still for a Christian mother or a Christian teacher to give. A child, like that which this friend is holding in her arms, is the best of all jewels. Many reasons might be given to prove that this is true. But we have only room to mention *three.*

A Christian child is the best jewel since,

1. *It is the most valuable.*—Suppose you have a ruby, or a diamond, or any other jewel of that kind. If you wish to know how valuable it is, or how much it is worth, you have only to take it to a jeweler and ask him how much it is worth, and he will tell you at once what its value is. But who can tell how much the soul of a child—this best jewel—is worth? Jesus understands this question better than any one else, and he has told us that this jewel is worth more than the whole world. This is more than can be said of all the other jewels in the world put together. And so we may say that the soul of a child is the best jewel because it is the most valuable.

Again it is the best jewel, because,

2. *It is the most beautiful.*—Jewels are very beautiful. Look at the bright red color of the ruby; or the clear blue of the sapphire; or the sparkling brightness of the diamond. These are beautiful indeed. Yet these are as nothing compared to the beauty that marks the soul of a child that is learning to love Jesus, and trying to be like him. This is one reason why God calls his people his jewels (Mal. 3 : 17). And this is why we are told that he greatly desires their "beauty" (Ps. 45 : 11).

When we look at a pearl, or a diamond, or any other jewel of this kind, we see at once all the beauty that belongs to it. If we look at it again

to-morrow, or next month, or next year, it will be just the same that it is to-day. Its beauty does not grow or increase. But it is very different with this best jewel of which we are speaking. This will grow more beautiful from day to day. And this increase of its beauty will go on through life, as it grows more like Jesus. And when this life ends, the increasing beauty of this best jewel will not end. There will never be an end to this. It will go on growing more and more beautiful through all eternity. This is a good reason then for saying that the soul of a child is the best jewel. It is more beautiful than any other jewel.

But then there is another reason why the soul of a Christian child is the best jewel:

3. *It is the most useful.*—We use jewels for ornaments. When we look at the sparkling beauty belonging to them, we find pleasure in the sight. But that is about all the good they can do. They set us no good example. They teach us no useful lessons. They never led one soul to Jesus. We cannot try to make ourselves like them. But it is different with the best jewels of which we are speaking. What beautiful examples have been set, and what useful lessons have been taught, by children who are loving and serving Jesus! How many illustrations of this might be given! But we have only room for one.

What Lou did.—"We have queer girls at our school," said little Lou to her cousin Hal.

"Why? Do they wear old dresses, or bonnets, or anything of that sort?" asked her cousin.

"No!" said Lou, eagerly. "But there are so many things they won't believe. For instance, there's Lucy Smith, who says there's no use in being a Christian; for those she knows are no better than other people."

"Can't you show her there is something real in being a Christian?"

"I'm only a little girl, Cousin Hal."

"Yes, darling; but I am sure there must be some way for little girls, even, to show their love for Jesus."

Lou began to be very careful about what she said and did, and she asked God to fill her heart with love to everybody, even to those who were unkind to her. Not long after this Lucy Smith came to her one day at recess, and whispered,

"Dear Lou, I want to take back all I said about Christians. I've been watching you, and you are so kind to that disagreeable Sue Nolan, though she does all she can to vex you, that I am sure Jesus helps you. After all, Lou, I would like very much to be a Christian."

This made that little girl feel very happy. She was one of the best jewels. Children like her are the best jewels because they are *more valuable, more beautiful,* and *more useful,* than any other jewels.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BABY AND ITS LESSONS.

HERE we have a very pretty picture of a nursery. There is the cradle with the new baby in it, sleeping quietly. Behind the cradle is a bureau, with the big, old family Bible lying on the top of it. To the left of the bureau sits the baby's mother. She is busy sewing. At her side sits the baby's eldest sister. She is busy too, attending to something in her lap. But she has stopped a moment in her work, and is looking earnestly at the baby. Her little sister stands between her and the cradle. She is looking at the baby too; but you can see in a moment that she is not at all pleased with the baby for coming. We shall have something more to say about this presently.

The dear little helpless baby! Look at it as it lies quietly sleeping there; how much it has to learn! That is true. But then it has something to *teach* too.

When a new baby comes into a family, one lesson it may teach is *the lesson of carefulness.*

Everybody in the family ought to learn to be careful when a new baby comes into it, or else there will be harm done. Look at the little girl in our picture standing by the cradle. How unhappy she looks! She is pouting, with her finger in her mouth, and is even trampling on her poor little dolly. She is feeling jealous of the new baby. Bridget the nurse, or one of her aunts, has been talking to her, and has carelessly told her that the baby has come to take her place, and that her mamma won't love her any more. In this way her little heart has been filled with jealousy towards the dear baby, and she wishes it hadn't come. It is very wrong to say such things about the new baby to its next oldest brother or sister. The baby comes to teach us all the lesson of carefulness at such times. Here are some simple lines about a little girl who got over this wrong feeling, and learned to love the new baby in spite of what Bridget had said. They are called

"LULU'S COMPLAINT."

"I'se a poor 'ittle sorrowful baby,
For Bidget is way down stairs;
My titten has scratched my fin'er,
And dolly won't say her p'ayers.

"I haint seen my bootiful mamma
Since ever so long ado;
An' I haint her tunninest baby
No londer, for Bidget says so.

"Mamma's dot anoder new baby;
Dod dived it—he did—yes'erday.
And it kies, it kies, oh, so defful,
I wis' he would tate it away.

"I don't want no 'sweet 'ittle sister,'
I want my dood mamma, I do;
I want her to tiss me, and tiss me,
An' tall me her p'ecious Lulu.

"I dess my dear papa will b'in me
A 'ittle dood titten, some day,—
Here's nurse wid mamma's new baby,
I wis' she would tate it away.

"Oh, oh, what tunnin' red fin'ers;
It sees me, 'ite out of its eyes;
I dess we will teep it, and dive it
Some canny whenever it kies.

"I dess I will dive it my dolly
To play wid mos' eve'y day;
An' I dess, I dess—say, Bidget,
Ask Dod not to tate it away."

Now Lulu would have been saved all this trouble if her nurse Bridget had only learned the lesson of carefulness, which the baby was sent to teach.

Another lesson which a new baby may teach is *the lesson of usefulness.*

Robbie was a nice thoughtful little fellow, about five years old. A new baby had been sent into Robbie's house. He was talking with his grandma about it, not long after, and this was what Robbie thought: "Well, now, I suppose I shall have to be very good, because we've got this baby; for

mother won't want her to be naughty, and she will be if I am."

Robbie was exactly right. The new baby had come to teach him, and every one else in that family, to be good. That was a lesson of usefulness.

And then there is one other lesson which the new baby is sent to teach, when it comes into a family, and that is *the lesson of happiness.*

This follows naturally from the last lesson. When I was a little boy at school, I remember this line was one of the first I ever learned to read: "*To be good is to be happy.*" This is the true *secret of happiness.*—"Mother," said little Minnie, "I have learned how to be happy, very happy." "Have you, my dear? Well, tell me the secret." "Why, it's by forgetting myself, and always trying to make those around me happy."

And if, in every family where a new baby comes, the lesson of carefulness, the lesson of usefulness, and the lesson of happiness are learned, the baby's coming will be a blessing.

CHAPTER X.

THE FIRESIDE LESSON.

HERE is a pleasant scene. We see a mother with her little child on her knee, sitting by the fireside on a winter evening. It may be about the time of the Christmas holidays, or not long after, for we see on the floor the baby's dolly is lying on her back; near by is a toy that looks very much like a young elephant; there is something else near this, but it is hard to tell exactly what it is. Pussy is sitting before the fender, enjoying the warmth of the fire. No doubt she is purring loudly, because pleased with her situation; it is an interesting thing about cats, that they always purr when they are pleased.

This is evidently an old-fashioned fireplace, for there is a deep recess to it; and on the sides and top of this recess are little square divisions, with some figure on each one. These squares are called *tiles*. Tiles are made out of the same kind of fine clay from which our dinner-plates, or cups and saucers, are made. They are finished like them,

with a smooth, glossy surface, and when used in fireplaces they had pictures made on them, connected with different Bible stories. If you look at the tiles in our engraving, you will see the marks of these pictures upon them; but they are not plain enough to enable us to tell what the pictures are. This mother is pointing with her hand to one of these pictures, and talking to her little girl about it. These old-fashioned tiles, with Bible pictures on them, must have been very nice things to have around the sides of a nursery fireplace. They would be a great help to a mother in teaching her children, and a great blessing to the children in enabling them to understand and remember what their mother taught. Let me give one illustration of *the usefulness of the old-fashioned tiles.*

The Rev. Dr. Philip Doddridge was a very good and useful minister of the gospel. He lived in England about a hundred years ago. Besides being very useful as a preacher of the gospel, while he lived he wrote some books which have been very useful since his death. One of his books was a commentary on the New Testament. This was intended especially to be used in family worship, and has been the means of doing much good.

Another of his books was called "Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul." This

was intended to show us how to become Christians, and a great number of persons have been much helped by the use of this book in trying to serve God.

Well, this good man tells us that when he was a little boy they had in his home one of these old-fashioned fireplaces, with tiles round it, having Bible pictures on them. And he says that the first thing which led him to try to be a Christian was hearing his mother talk one evening, about the Bible story connected with the picture on one of those tiles.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BEST LOOKING-GLASS.

THIS girl with a looking-glass in her hand is taking a good look at herself. She has just tried on a new hat, with ribbons and feathers on it, and very naturally she wants to see how her hat looks.

I have no fault to find with this girl's looking-glass. It may be a very good one; but I wish to speak of one that I know is very much better than that. The apostle Paul compares the Bible to a looking-glass. This is what he means when he says, "We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3 : 18).

The Bible is the glass here spoken of; and this gives us a nice subject to speak about, viz., *the Bible the best looking-glass.* It would be a good reason to prove this is true, if we were only to say that this is the looking-glass which God made, and therefore it must be better than any ever made by

men. But, without stopping here, there are three other good reasons, which prove that the Bible is the best looking-glass.

1. It is so, in the first place, because *it shows us our faults.*

And this is what no other glass can do. The little girl in our picture can look into her glass and tell how her hat fits, or how her hair or her face looks, but that is all. Looking into that glass will not tell her anything about her heart or soul. It will not show her what is wrong in her thoughts, or feelings, or words, or actions. But the Bible is the best looking-glass because it will do this. It tells us all about our sins. It shows us clearly what the will of God is, and then teaches us that everything contrary to God's will is sin. If your face is soiled, you can tell it in a moment when you look into a mirror. But when we read the Bible carefully we are looking into God's mirror. This will show us all our faults. And this is a good reason for saying that the Bible is the best looking-glass.

2. It is so, in the second place, because *it shows us how to get rid of our faults.*

None of the looking-glasses that men make can do this. If the little girl in our picture should have a black spot on her face, the glass will show it to her the moment she looks into it. But that is all the glass will do. It will not whisper to her anything about the water, and the soap, and the

towel, by the help of which the spot may be removed.

But it is different with God's looking-glass, the Bible. This not only shows us what our faults are; it not only shows us the spots of sin on our souls, but it tells us also of the fountain that has been opened to take our sins away. It bids us to wash in that fountain and be clean. It tells of the blood of Jesus Christ which cleanseth from all sin. And when we think of this, we must admit that it is a good reason why the Bible is the best looking-glass. It not only shows us what our faults are, but it shows us also how to get rid of them.

3. And then there is another reason why the Bible is the best looking-glass; it is so because *it tells us our fortunes.*

We have heard of men called magicians. Sometimes these men have pretended that they could make wonderful mirrors, which had the power, when people looked in them, of telling what would happen to them next year, or in other years to come. But these men were only cheating when they pretended to do this. The Bible tells us that "we know not what *shall be* on the morrow." No one knows this but God. And when I speak of the Bible telling our fortunes, I do not mean that it will tell us whether we are going to be sick or well, rich or poor, next year. But I mean it will tell us plainly that if we learn really to love and

serve God, this will make us happy; but that if we neglect to do this, we never can be really happy, either in this world or in the world to come.

While Mr. Moody was preaching at one of the country towns in England, a young girl, connected with a gypsy camp in the neighborhood, attended some of the meetings and was converted. Soon after this, some gay young men went to the camp of the gypsies to have some sport.

They applied to this young girl to know if she could tell them their fortunes. She said she could, and invited them to her tent. Picking up a New Testament, she said, without letting them know what it was, "Here is the best book in the world for telling people's fortunes." And then she read to those young men the last verse in the third chapter of John's gospel: "*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*"

The Bible is the best looking-glass, because *it shows us our faults, it shows us how to get rid of them,* and *it tells us our fortunes.* "Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth *therein* . . . this man shall be blessed in his deed" (James 1 : 25).

CHAPTER XII.

THE FARM-YARD SKETCH.

WHAT a pretty scene this picture sets before us! And such must have been the thought of some good-natured person, who has written the following simple lines about it. They are taken from an English periodical called "Little Folks."

"The day is cold, the snow falls fast,
And in the fields the timid sheep
Are glad of any hedge, or shade,
Beneath which they may creep.

"Thrice happy they whose lot is cast
With master sensible and kind,
Who doth provide them shelter warm
From snow and biting wind.

"See Tom, the farmer's lad, come out,
And bring with him the welcome meal,
He knows it is their dinner time,
And hungry they must feel.

"Contentedly enough they take
The turnips from his well-known hand;
And Tom, with pride, esteems his sheep
The best in all the land.

"'Be kind to all,' the farmer says;
And so his sheep are tended well;
Besides, he knows that sheep well kept
For double prices sell."

It is quite true, as the last of these verses says, that those who are kind to their sheep, and feed and keep them well, will get more money for them. But there are two other reasons, and better than this, why we should be kind to the sheep.

1. One of these reasons is, *because of what we owe them.*

Think how much of our *clothing* we owe to the sheep. If there were no sheep we should have no wool. And what should we do without wool? How large a part of our clothing is made out of wool! Think of the stockings, and the dresses, and the shawls, and the coats, and the caps, and the muffs, and comfortables, and lots of other things that are made out of wool! We should be badly off if we had to give up all these things. It is easy enough to make them when we have the wool. Yet we never could make the wool. But the sheep make wool out of grass. They eat the grass; then they grow and the wool grows on them, and we cut it off and make all sorts of nice woolen things. And when we feel how warm and comfortable these things make us, we should be kind towards the sheep.

And then think how much of our *food* we owe

to the sheep! Mutton and lamb are among the most useful and nourishing articles of food that we have on our tables. And these we owe to the sheep and the lambs. If we had nothing but grass to eat we should starve. But God sends the sheep and the lambs to eat grass. Then it is turned into nice, tender mutton and lamb. These we can eat, and eating them makes us hearty and strong. And so, when we remember how much we owe the sheep for our clothing and for our food, we should always treat them kindly.

2. But there is another reason why we should treat the sheep and lambs with kindness, and that is, *because of what they teach us.*

When the prophet Isaiah was speaking of Christ, our blessed Saviour, and of the patience and meekness with which he bore his dreadful sufferings for us, he compared him to a sheep and a lamb. He said, "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Isa. 53: 7). And so, when we look on a sheep or a lamb in its patience and gentleness, it should lead us to think of Jesus and to try to be like him. And this is what he means when he says himself, "Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart" (Matt. 11: 29)

CHAPTER XIII.

SUNDAY-SCHOOL WORK AMONG THE INDIANS.

HERE we have a picture of a company of twelve Indian children. They represent the Quapaws and the Modoc tribes. They belong to one of the Sunday-schools visited and aided by a missionary of the American Sunday-School Union. Some years ago these Indians were brought from the lava beds of the West, and settled in the Indian Territory.

This company of young Indians, as delegates from the Modoc tribe, attended a meeting of the Kansas State Sunday-school Convention. During the meetings of the Convention they occupied a place on the platform. There they sang together the hymn, "Who will be the next to follow Jesus," and also the "Sweet By and By." When requested to do so, they repeated in concert, in good, clear English, that sweetest of all texts, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

Two of these Indian scholars have become Christians, and are trying to love and serve Jesus. They all spell and read very nicely in English. They are very attentive in school, and try to understand what is taught them, and they have good memories, so that the lessons which they learn are not forgotten. In illustration of this, the following incident is mentioned. Some time ago one of our missionaries visited the Indian mission, and spent a night there. At the usual evening service he made an address to the scholars. In the course of his address he asked them to repeat after him the text, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." It was ten months after this before he visited the mission again. Then he asked the scholars what the text was which he had taught them on his former visit, and they repeated it to him. He also asked them what illustration of the meaning of that text he had given them, and they told him what it was. Now I think there are very few of our eastern scholars who could do as well as this. I am very sure that if I should make an address to a school, and ten months afterwards should find the scholars able to give a good account of that address, I should feel very much encouraged.

The American Sunday-School Union is one of the best agencies to go among these Indians

with the hope of doing them good. Look at our present picture of the Indian scholars taught and trained in Bible schools, and in their bright intelligent looks, and the neat style of their dress, you will have good evidence of the blessed influence which the Sunday-school is exerting on these people.

Our missionary, Mr. Cassell, sends a letter from a half-breed Indian who never went to school in his life. He taught himself to read and write by printing words from books, and then copying anything that he met with. He has taken the warmest interest in the Union Sunday-school established in his neighborhood, as his letter shows.

Here is an extract from his letter, without altering the spelling or the grammar.

Cane Creek, Creek Nation
feb. 23d, 18—.

Mr. John Cassell, Dear Sir

. . . I have received t' Books all right and we has commenced our school on the 20th of this month. . . . We have made a good start with our school, we has a large number of comers to our school, and still increasing every Sunday, I cant helpe but saying that we are Goin to have a very Good Times of our School, . . . every one seems to take an intrust, mens and woman Boys and Girls all is at one mind about tending our Sunday School, So I am more than

happy to think of the time you was here with us on Cane Creek.

please write just as soon as you can . . .

yours Dear Friend Isaac A. Smith.

Certainly this letter does great credit to our friend Smith. I am sure that every reader will unite with me in the prayer—"God bless Isaac A. Smith, and the Sunday-school which he attends!"

CHAPTER XIV.

MISSIONARY RAFTS.

THIS is an interesting picture. It carries our thoughts a long way off. Abyssinia, the country to which it refers, is in Africa, south of Egypt, lying between the river Nile and the Red Sea. It is a mountainous country, and has numerous large rivers running through it. They have no bridges over their rivers. They use rafts on which to cross them. And sometimes they make an awkward sort of a boat, out of the skin of an ox. It looks more like a tub than a boat. They will put a man in one of these skin boats, and then some one has to get into the water and swim behind the boat, so as to push it along. We should call this a very awkward way of crossing a river.

In our picture we see some of the native Abyssinians helping a missionary over the river on one of their rafts. That was a good thing to do. If we were there we should be glad to help the missionary in that way or any other that was in our

power. But here we are, not in Abyssinia, but in our own Christian homes in America. And what can we do to help the missionaries? Trying to answer this question in the way that our picture suggests, we may speak of two kinds of rafts that we may build that will be a real help to the missionaries, not only in Abyssinia, but in other places, too. The missionaries of the American Sunday-School Union in our own country, the missionaries in China, in India, in Africa, and in the islands of the sea, may all be helped in their work by the rafts here referred to.

1. One of these rafts is *the praying raft.*

Jesus taught us in our daily prayers to say, "Thy kingdom come." If we understand this prayer, and offer it in the right way, we may make it a raft that will help every missionary in the world over the deep waters of any trouble that he may have to meet.

A native African, who was once a slave but now is free, was questioned by the minister whose church he was going to join, about this part of the Lord's Prayer.

"What do you mean," asked the minister, "when you say, 'Thy kingdom come'?"

"I don't mean, massa, dat God's kingdom may come in de world, or in de sky—cause God is king dar now; but I mean dat his kingdom may come in our hearts."

"And what do you mean by God's kingdom coming in our hearts?"

"I mean, massa, dat God by his grace may rule in my heart, and in de hearts of all men."

Wishing to find out whether he understood just what these words meant, the minister asked, "What do you mean by God ruling by his grace in our hearts?"

"I mean, massa, dat by the blessed Spirit he may make me, and all men, what he wants us to be." This was right. And if we use the prayer in this way, we shall be helping the missionaries everywhere by this praying raft.

2. But there is another way in which we may help them, and that is by *the giving raft.*

In the 31st verse of the 68th Psalm David says that "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God." This country was in the same part of Africa with Abyssinia. And in the 30th verse we are told that this will be *when God's people learn to give as they ought to do.* If Christians, young and old, would learn to give to God one-tenth of all they have, which is a Bible rule, what a splendid raft would be furnished to help the missionaries everywhere!

A Bag of Farthings.—While they were taking the annual collection at a Sunday-school in England, a boy only seven years old brought a bag and put it on the plate. The bag was heavy.

When opened it was found to contain *two hundred and eighty-five farthings.* He had not *found* them: he had not *begged* them: he had *earned* them by running errands for his mother. She allowed him to keep all the farthings given in change. And instead of spending them in cakes or candies for himself, he kept them for the missionary cause.

Let us all try our hands at these two rafts—the *praying* raft and the *giving* raft—and see how much we can do to help the missionaries.

CHAPTER XV.

THE SHAH OF PERSIA AND HIS OFFICERS.

THE word shah means king. The person who stands foremost in our picture is this shah or king. Those around him are his attendants or officers. The picture now before us was copied from a photograph, which was taken of the shah and his friends during a visit which he made to England and other parts of Europe some years ago.

In speaking about this picture there are two things we may do: one is to take a peep at Persia; the other is to tell a story of the shah.

1. Well, then we may begin with taking *a peep at Persia.*

I suppose we all know enough about geography to remember that Persia is an important country that lies in the western part of Asia, between the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf. Its history runs a long way back. Cyrus, who is spoken of in history as "the great and good," and who is mentioned in the Bible as having given the Jews permission to return to their own country and

rebuild Jerusalem after their seventy years' captivity, was the shah or king of Persia in those days.

The Persians have always been a very learned people. A large part of the rich men among them spend their time chiefly in studying languages, history, astronomy, and other branches of learning.

The religion of the Persians is mainly Mohammedan. The Koran is their Bible, and Mohammed their one prophet or teacher. But there are Christian missionaries laboring in different parts of this country, and we may hope that the day is not far off when the Persians will give up their Koran for our Bible, and when they will worship Jesus as the only true prophet and teacher sent from God.

The government of Persia is what we call a *despotic* government. This means a government where the king or chief ruler can do whatever he pleases. There is no law in Persia to bind the shah or king. He can take away the property of any of the people when he chooses to do so; and not only their property, but their lives. No one's life is safe there. Whether it be the highest ruler or the poorest beggar in the land, the shah can order his head to be taken off whenever he wishes to do so. And there is nothing to hinder him from doing it. The people have nothing to do but submit to the will of the king.

This is not a very pleasing peep at Persia, but it may make us feel thankful that we do not live in such a country.

2. And now we may take another look at the picture, and then be ready for *the story about the shah.*

We are indebted to that excellent periodical, *The British Workman,* both for this picture of the shah and the story about him.

When the shah came to London, the good Queen Victoria invited him to her palace at Windsor. During his visit there he wished to have a photograph taken of himself and his attendants. He sent a messenger one Saturday into London, to engage Messrs. Elliott and Fry, who were first-rate photographers, to come out to Windsor the next day, which was Sunday, and make a picture of himself and his attendants. Those artists were good, faithful, Christian men. They believed that God required them not to work on the Sabbath day; but to keep it holy. They told the shah's messenger how they felt about it. They said they were very sorry that they could not comply with his request; but their religion forbade them to work on that day, and they could not do it. The messenger said the shah would be very angry if they did not go, and would probably get some one else to do the work for him. "Not for all the shah's jewels," said those faithful men, "could we consent to break

the Sabbath day." This was very noble conduct on the part of these men. And when the shah heard of it, and understood that it was only on account of their faithfulness to their religion that they declined to go on Sunday, instead of getting angry with them he said, "They have done right. I think the better of them for it. No one else shall take my picture. Tell them to come the next day." So they went and took the photograph, of which this picture is a copy.

There are two things to admire in this story. One is, the faithfulness of those Christian men in being willing to run the risk of suffering loss rather than to break the Sabbath day. The other is, the good sense of the shah in not getting angry when he found men who were determined to obey the King of heaven rather than the king of Persia.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE LITTLE MISSIONARY; OR LEARNING TO DO GOOD.

THIS little girl has on her arm a basket filled with good things, which she is going to take to a poor family in their neighborhood. She has a good, pious mother, who is trying to get her into the habit of making herself useful, or of being a home missionary. The dear child herself is trying to be a Christian, and so she is always ready to go where her mother wishes to send her. It is always pleasant to see young persons getting into the habit of being useful.

I wish to speak of *four* reasons why all persons, whether young or old, should get into the habit of doing good, or of making themselves useful.

1. And the first reason why we should do this is *because it is an easy thing.*

There are some things we never can do till we grow up to be men and women. And even when we are grown up there are some things that we cannot do unless we have a great deal of money.

But it is not necessary to wait till we grow up, or till we get rich, in order to make ourselves useful and to be doing good.

A Sunday-school teacher had a class of boys. He was trying to teach them this very lesson. "Boys," said he, "just try for one week how much good you can do. Keep your eyes open, and your hands ready, and come back next Sunday and tell me what you have done." They agreed. Next Sunday they were all in their places looking bright and happy, and each of them had something to tell. "Johnny," asked the teacher, "what did you do?" "Why, my mother is a washer-woman. The pump from which she gets her water is a good way off. Before going to school in the morning I brought her a tubful of water, and she said that was a great help to her." "And, Willie, what did you do?" "There is a poor old woman nearly blind living up the alley near our house. I asked her if I should come in and read her a chapter in the Bible every day. She thanked me, and said that would be the greatest comfort she could have." "And what did you do, Charley?" "I was going down the street one day with my eyes open and my hands ready, looking for something to do. A gentleman asked me to hold his horse while he went into a store. When he came out he gave me a quarter of a dollar, and I have brought it to put in the missionary box."

All the boys had been doing good in some way. They found it was, as their teacher had told them, an easy thing to make themselves useful.

2. Another reason why we should try to do good is because *it is an honorable thing.*

Our blessed Lord, when he was on earth, spent his time in going "about doing good." And he was the most honorable person who ever trod this earth. And if we follow his example in trying to do good, and in making ourselves useful, we shall share in the honor that belongs to him. He said to his disciples, "As *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you." He was sent to do good, and he sends his people for the same purpose. Learning to do good will make us like Jesus, and this is the greatest honor we can have.

When kings and emperors wish to put honor on those who have served them faithfully, they give them gold medals or other ornaments to wear. And those who get these marks of the king's favor are very proud of them. They think it a great honor to wear them. But this is only what the Bible calls "the honor that cometh from man." These marks of honor may be lost. We must leave them behind us when we die. But if we get to be like Jesus, we have an honor that none can take away from us. And when we die and go to heaven we shall take it with us. This is an honor that will last forever. Surely then we should try

to do all the good we can, because this is an honorable thing.

3. The third reason why we should try to do good is, because *it is a pleasant thing.*

It is pleasant to God. He loves to have us do all the good we can. The apostle Paul compares doing good to a sacrifice offered to God, and then says, that "with such sacrifices God is well pleased" (Heb. 13 : 16). And it is a strong motive to lead us to do good when we know that it pleases God. But it is pleasant to men as well as to God. If we give bread to the hungry, or water to the thirsty, or clothing to the naked, or fuel to warm those who are suffering from cold, and we see the tears of gratitude come into their eyes, or feel the warm pressure of their hands, or hear the earnest words in which they breathe out the prayer, "God bless you," we know how pleasant our little gifts have been to them. And we cannot know that without feeling that it is pleasant to us. There is no greater joy or pleasure in the world than that which springs from doing good. We ought to do it, then, because it is a pleasant thing.

4. And then there is another reason why we ought to form the habit of doing good, and that is because *it is a profitable thing.*

This must not be our only motive, or our chief motive, in making ourselves useful. Our Saviour tells us, "Do good . . . hoping for nothing

again" (Luke 6 : 35). This means we must not expect those whom we help to pay us back. But we may be sure that God will attend to this. Jesus himself has said, "Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold *water* only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward" (Matt. 10 : 42). This makes the profit certain. And if it is an easy thing, an honorable thing, a pleasant thing, and a profitable thing to do good, we should certainly try to do all the good we can.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE JOURNEY OF LIFE.—THE START.

WE have four beautiful pictures of "The Journey of Life." These pictures represent four different stages of our life on earth. Here we have the first of the four. We call this "The Start." Take a good look at it, for it is a very pretty picture.

Here we see a youth just setting off on the journey of which we are speaking. A smooth path lies before him, with flowers blooming in it. On the right hand is a beautiful lake. A fountain of water is playing there. Two swans are sailing gracefully over the smooth surface of the lake, and little sail-boats are making their way from point to point. In the distance we see the tall, dark mountains lifting their giant forms towards heaven. Clouds of mist are wrapping the mountains round. A church at the foot of the mountains is silently pointing towards heaven with its graceful spire, while, to crown the glory of the landscape, the rainbow is seen stretching its form

of matchless beauty over all. How bright and cheering everything looks in this picture! This is just the way in which the journey of life appears to most young persons as they are about to make "the start" in that journey.

And here I wish to speak of *two* things that we must have if we hope to be successful in making "the journey of life."

1. In the first place we must have *a guide.*

This is absolutely necessary when we are making a journey over a road which we have never traveled before, and about which we know nothing; and this is just our condition when we begin to make "the journey of life." Above everything else we need a guide. And God offers himself to supply this need when he proposes this question to each of us: "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou *art* the guide of my youth?" (Jer. 3: 4.) God knows every step of this journey. If we take him for our guide, and follow his directions, we shall be making this start in the right way, and the journey will be a success; but if we start without a guide, we shall be sure to lose our way.

In the way of illustration here, let me refer to a little incident that occurred once while I was traveling in Switzerland. My companion and I were at Lauterbrunnen, and had made our arrangements to start the next day and make the journey

over the Wengern Alp on foot. We engaged a guide to go with us and show us the way. There was an English gentleman stopping at the same inn. He was going to make the same journey; but he thought the guides asked too much money for their services, so he concluded to go without a guide. He said he felt sure he could find the way himself. The next morning he took an early start, and went off all alone. After breakfast we set off to climb the mountain. When we got about half way up, in a very wild part of the way, our guide stopped, and, pointing to a person we could see far off from the road, said to us, "Yonder is the gentleman who refused to take a guide. He has lost his way. He never can get out of the mountains in that direction. Unless he comes back he must surely perish." Then he climbed up on a high point of the mountain's side, and, putting his hands to his mouth, he shouted out as loud as he could, "Come back! come back!" The man heard him. He turned back, and was saved, and we went on our way. Here we see the danger of traveling an unknown way without a guide. In this journey of life we are sure to lose our way if we start without a guide; and God, our Saviour, is the only one who can guide us safely. In making this start we must have a guide.

2. But then in starting on the journey of life

there is another thing we need besides a guide, and that is *a supply.*

This supply must include many things, but the most important will be the *needful provisions.* In a long journey this is what no earthly guide can engage to secure; but our heavenly Guide *can* and *will* do this. He says to every one who takes him as his guide, "Bread shall be given him; his waters *shall be* sure" (Isa. 33 : 16). But other things are needed on a long journey besides bread and water, and these will be provided too. Hence the apostle Paul says, "My God shall SUPPLY ALL YOUR NEED according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4: 19). This makes everything sure. There is nothing left for us to fear if we take Jesus for our friend. We shall have a guide that will never fail us, and a supply that will be always sure.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE JOURNEY OF LIFE.—THE OUTFIT.

THIS youth has started on his journey over the mountains that lie before him. We may hope that he has secured *the guide* and *the supply* spoken of in our last chapter.

What we have here to say may very well be put under such a heading as *the outfit.*

Now the traveler's outfit for a long journey must include several important things. The one that I prefer to speak about is his staff. For one who is starting on a journey over the mountains, as the youth in our picture is doing, it is very desirable that he should be furnished with *a good staff.*

This the youth in our picture seems to have. And in starting on "the journey of life" it is of the very first importance that we should each have a good staff. When King David was going through the most trying part of "the journey of life" he looked up to God, and said, "THY ROD and THY STAFF, they comfort me." The word of

God was what made the staff that David used in his journey. And this is the staff that we must take if we would make a successful journey.

And if you ask me to mention one of the best passages of God's word to be taken as the staff for "the journey of life," let me say that I know of none better than Isaiah 41 : 10. Here God says to every one who wishes to take him as guide, "*Fear thou not; for I* am *with thee: be not dismayed; for I* am *thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.*" This is a very precious promise. The four short words in the middle of it—"I will help thee"—make the very best staff we can have for "the journey of life." I have used this staff for more than fifty years, and have never found it to fail. If you take this staff with you, you may lean your whole weight upon it, and it will never break nor bend nor give way beneath you. When Jesus, our omnipotent Saviour, says to each of us, "I will help thee," what more can we need?

The Usefulness of this Staff Illustrated.—Let me give you from my own experience one little incident to show the help and comfort to be found in the use of this staff.

Some years ago I noticed one spring that my next monthly children's service would be on the afternoon of Easter Sunday. To be in harmony

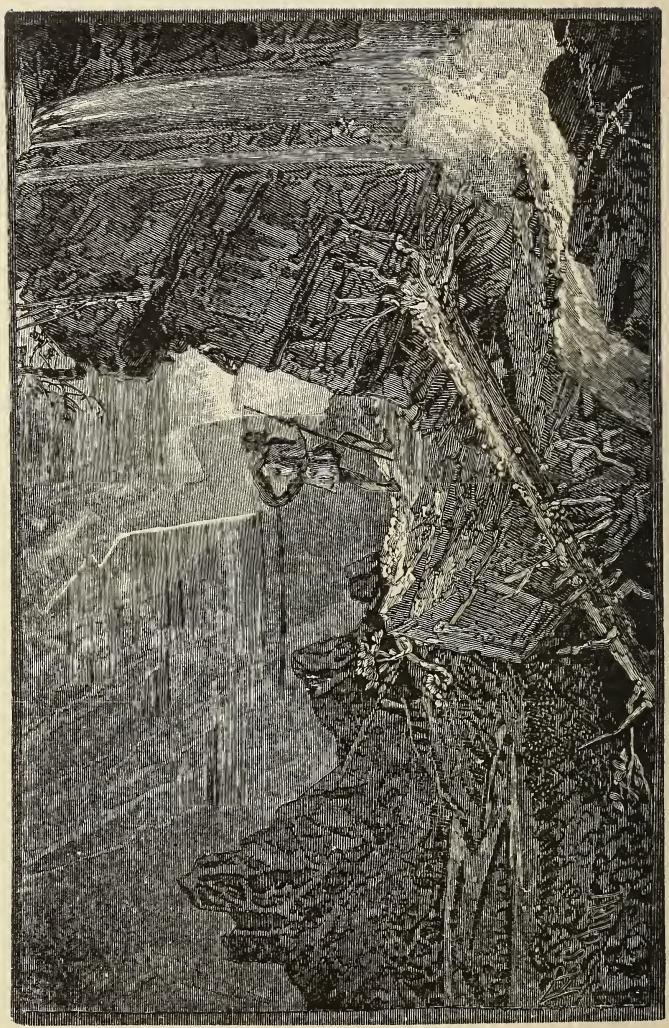
with the service of that interesting day, it would be desirable for me to have a sermon on the subject of the resurrection. So I went to my study one Monday evening to try to lay out my children's sermon for the coming Easter Sunday. I selected as the text for that occasion the words of our Saviour, "I am the resurrection." I wrote these words on a sheet of paper, and then tried to think out and put down the principal points to be dwelt upon in the sermon; but I could not think of anything to say. I tried and tried again, but without success. Then I walked up and down my study, and tried as hard as I could to get the subject into proper shape; but in vain. Then I kneeled down and prayed to God for the help and guidance that I needed. I pleaded this sweet promise: "I will help thee." I told the Lord how much I needed his help then. I thanked him for the many occasions on which he had helped me before, and entreated him to help me now once more. I spent the whole evening in this way, thinking and walking and praying, but I did not seem to make any progress. Bed-time came; and, weary with my long effort, I resolved to go and get some rest. In doing so I said to myself, "Well, the help I need has not come yet, but *I am sure it will come;* for God's promise never fails, and 'the Scripture cannot be broken.'"

I had early service at my church the next morn-

ing. As I was walking up Chestnut Street on my way there, just as I was going past Mr. Baldwin's beautiful conservatory, next door to the American Sunday-School Union, I said to myself, "Well, how about my children's sermon?" And then all in a moment it came, just as quick as a flash, and a nice, suitable outline for the sermon was suggested to my mind. It made me feel very happy; I went on my way rejoicing. After the service at church was over I went to my study, and put down the outline of the sermon that had been given me; and then I went to work, and wrote it all out, with great interest and pleasure.

Now, if the angel Gabriel had appeared to me that morning, and had handed me a note, saying, as he did so, "Here is the outline of your next children's sermon, which the Lord has sent you," I should have known very well where that sermon came from. I saw no angel, received no note; but I am just as certain that that sermon came from heaven as if the angel had appeared.

And this is only one instance, out of many that I could give, in which the staff of God's promise has been a help and comfort to me in time of need. And if you, my young friends, will take this staff and lean upon it, you will find it just what you need in "the journey of life." You will have a good outfit if you take this staff with you.



CHAPTER XIX.

THE JOURNEY OF LIFE.—THE STRUGGLE.

THE youth in our picture is having a hard time. His path is rough and rocky. The mountain torrents are rushing by him. The storm is bursting and the lightning flashing around him. And now the time has come for him to toil on and toil up in his difficult journey. He has to make "the struggle" on which the final success of his journey must depend. And as we go on in "the journey of life" before us we must all pass through just such an experience. The time will come when, like this youth, we must struggle manfully if we hope to get well through. And there are *three* things necessary for us to have if we would be successful in making this struggle.

1. In the first place we must have *confidence.*

I do not mean confidence in ourselves, but confidence in our Guide—our God. We see how Job exercised this confidence in the darkest hour of his trouble, when he looked up to the God who was afflicting him, and said, "Though he slay me, yet

will I trust in him" (Job 13 : 15). And David was showing the same confidence when he said, "I will fear no evil : for thou *art* with me" (Ps. 23 : 4).

Here is an illustration of the way in which this confidence helps those who are engaged in this struggle :

A pious German minister one day found his poor mother in great distress about a dollar which she needed very much, but did not know how to get. He was not able at that time to give her the needed dollar. He lifted up his heart in silent prayer to God that he would send his mother the dollar. Then he turned up an hour-glass which stood by his mother and said, "I feel confident that if this dollar is really needed it will be on your table before this hour-glass runs out. If it is not found here, God will show you that it was not necessary, and will help you to do without it." But before the hour-glass was half run out there was a knock at the door. On opening it, a person was standing there who had come several miles to bring the old lady a dollar which was owing to her. And so the minister's confidence was rewarded by securing to his mother the help that she needed. And thus his confidence aided them in the struggle of life.

2. The second thing needed in our struggle is *courage.*

When the apostle was in the midst of his life journey he said one day that he knew very well

that in "every place" to which he was going "bonds and afflictions" awaited him. This would have made many persons feel sad and fearful; but it had no such effect on the great apostle. He had true courage. This led him to say, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy" (Acts 20 : 24). Here we see the apostle's courage helping him on in his struggle.

What great courage Daniel's three friends had! The king of Babylon had set up his golden image, and threatened to cast into the burning fiery furnace any persons who refused to fall down and worship it; but those brave men would not do it. They were brought before the king. He told them they must fall down and worship his image, or else they would be cast into the furnace. They told him that the God whom they worshipped could save them from being burnt by the fire of that furnace if he saw fit to do so; but whether he should do so or not, they would not worship that image. You all know what the end of that story was. How truly the courage of those brave men helped them in their great struggle!

Noble Courage.—A poor boy was attending school one day, with a large patch on one of the knees of his trowsers. One of his school-mates made fun of him for this, and called him "Old Patch." "Why don't you fight him?" cried one

of the boys. "I'd give it to him if he called me so." "Oh," said the boy, "you don't suppose I'm ashamed of my patch, do you? For my part I'm thankful for a good mother to keep me out of rags. *I'm proud of my patch for her sake.*" This was noble. That boy had the courage that would make him successful in the struggles of life. We must have courage in our struggle if we hope to come out right.

3. And then the third thing that we need in this struggle is *perseverance.*

Our Saviour said, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." Perseverance in anything means *enduring*, or keeping on with it, till we get through. And this is absolutely necessary in the struggle we have to keep up in "the journey of life."

The Perseverance of an Ant.—A great general used to tell his friends an anecdote of his early life. "I once," said he, "was forced to take shelter from my enemies in a ruined building, where I sat alone for many hours. Trying to divert my mind from my misfortunes, I fixed my eyes on an ant that was carrying a grain of wheat bigger than itself up a high wall. I counted the efforts it made to accomplish its object. The grain of wheat fell to the ground *sixty-nine times;* but the little insect *persevered*, and the *seventieth* time it succeeded and reached the top of the wall. This sight gave me courage at that time, when I greatly

needed it, and I never forgot the lesson it taught me."

And this is a lesson we all need to learn as we go on with the "journey of life." And if we only have the *confidence,* the *courage,* and the *perseverance,* of which we have now spoken, as we go on with "the journey of life," our "struggle" will be sure to end in success. Let us all be sure to get these three things, and then it will be well with us.

CHAPTER XX.

THE JOURNEY OF LIFE.—THE VICTORY.

THIS is the last stage in this important journey. We have spoken about "the start," "the outfit," "the struggle." What remains for us to notice is "the victory."

Here, in the picture before us, we see the traveler in the last stage of his journey. "The struggle" is over, and he is quietly waiting for the reward of his victory. We see the ocean of eternity calmly spread out before him, and far off in the distance the domes and spires of the heavenly city are seen standing clearly out to view. The successful traveler is waiting now till the summons comes for him to launch out on that ocean and reach the golden city.

And this is just the position which the apostle Paul was occupying when, in speaking of himself, he used those well-known words, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me" (2 Tim. 4 : 7, 8).

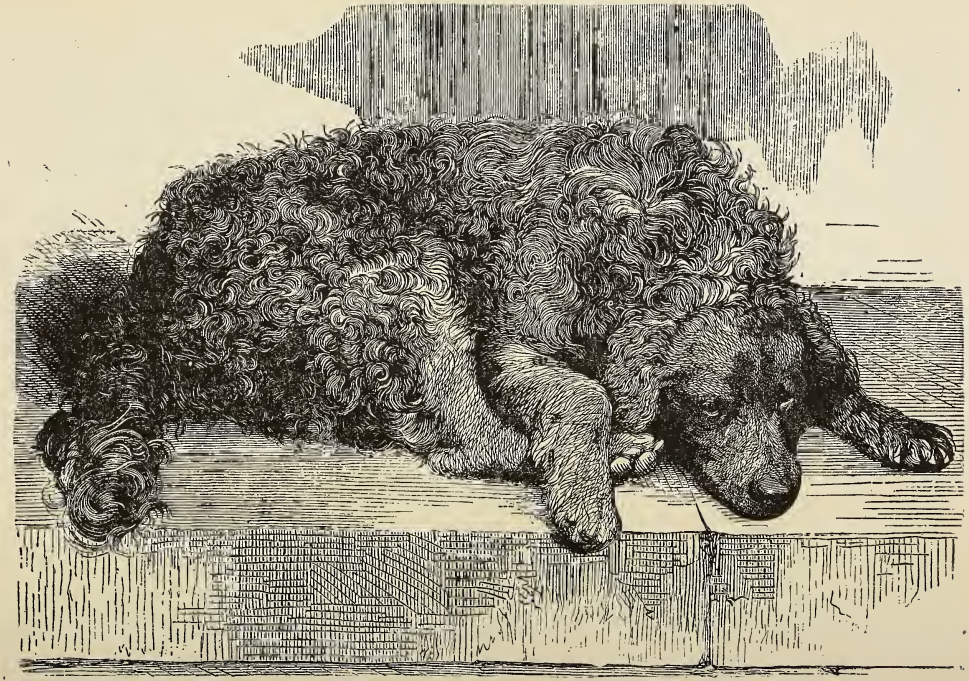
Like the old man in our picture, Paul had nearly reached the end of his journey, and the joy which he then felt arose from two sources. One of these was *the memory of the past;* the other was *the hope of the future.* And every one who pursues "the journey of life" to the same victorious end, will be able to take up the apostle's words and share the joy which he felt.

1. *The memory of the past* will be full of joy to all such persons. This joy will be found in recollecting what the grace of God has done for us. It was this grace which enabled us to take "the start" rightly in this journey; it was this grace which gave us what we needed for "the outfit;" and it was to this grace we were indebted for all the help required in keeping up "the struggle" through which we have passed. Many a time we should have failed in this struggle and been overcome if it had not been for the help of this grace. This grace has never failed. It has always been sufficient for us. And, like David, we shall be able to say at the close of our journey, Surely goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our life. And there will be great joy in such a memory as this. Let us seek that grace continually as we go on in our journey, and it will surely bring us to just such a victory as the old man in our picture is rejoicing in, as he sits down at the close of his journey, and finds his heart

filled with joy in *the memory of the past* and hope for the future.

2. But then the words of the apostle above-quoted show that the joy he was feeling had to do with *the hope of the future*, as well as the memory of the past. He says, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a CROWN of righteousness."

Men consider an earthly crown as the highest honor and the greatest blessing that can be had in this world, and yet those who gain this crown seldom find in it the happiness which they expected. They find the old saying true, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown." Cares, anxieties and dangers are always connected with an earthly crown; and then soon death comes, and the crown has to be laid aside forever. But how different it will be with the crown which awaits the victorious Christian at the end of "the journey of life!" Paul calls it "a crown of RIGHTEOUSNESS." It is also called in the Bible "a crown of LIFE" and "a crown of GLORY." There will be no cares, no dangers, and no troubles connected with the wearing of this crown. "Fulness of joy and pleasures forevermore" are the only things that the wearers of this crown will know. How well then the victor in this journey may have joy in the hope of the future!



CHAPTER XXI.

LESSONS FROM DOGS.

WHAT a fine-looking dog this is! See what a good head he has! Look at his big, bushy tail, and his splendid coat of soft, curly hair! It is a real comfort to have a good intelligent dog; one that you can safely trust.

We generally think of dogs as only good for hunting or for watching. But there are other things for which dogs are useful. And among these it may well be said that dogs are sometimes good teachers. I do not mean to say that they can give us lessons in spelling, or reading, or writing, or arithmetic. But there are other things, more important than these, in which some dogs are good teachers, and about which we may learn valuable lessons from them. I mean by this that they set us good examples of how we ought to act. There are many practical lessons of this kind which the dogs teach us. I will only speak now of three of these lessons.

1. And the first of these to which I would refer is *the lesson of perseverance.*

A farmer had a dog named Rollo. He was very intelligent, and seemed to understand all that was said to him. One day this farmer had been mending the fence between his garden and his orchard. When he had finished the work, he left his basket of tools in the orchard, and went into the barn. Rollo was lying near the barn door. His master spoke to him and said, "Rollo, I have left my basket of tools in the orchard: go, and bring it to me." The dog started in a moment. When he reached the place he took hold of the handle of the basket with his mouth, but found it was too heavy for him to lift.

Now many a boy or girl on finding this would have given the matter up at once, and would have gone back and said, "The basket of tools is too heavy for me to carry." But Rollo did not do so. He evidently belonged to the "Try Company." So, as he could not carry the tools altogether, he took them one by one, and carried them to his master, and laid them down at his feet, till the basket was half empty; then he picked it up and took it to his master.

This dog was setting a good example of the lesson of perseverance. Let us learn the lesson he taught. Let us follow his example of perseverance, and then, by God's help, we shall be sure to succeed in everything that is right and good and have great peace in our minds.

2. The next thing we may learn from some dogs is *the lesson of usefulness.*

One of the highest mountains in Switzerland is the St. Gothard mountain. Near the top of it is a large building called a convent or hospice. A number of monks live in this building. A carriage road from Switzerland, down into Italy, goes over the top of this mountain. This road was much traveled before the railway tunnel through the mountains was completed. But in the winter, when heavy falls of snow take place, travelers could not tell how to find the road, and many perished in the snow.

But the monks at this convent keep a number of large dogs, known as the St. Bernard dogs. After a heavy fall of snow they send these dogs out, each one having a parcel of refreshments strapped on his back. The dogs seem to understand their business, and are glad to attend to it. They run about over the fields of snow, and keep up a loud barking. And when they find some poor traveler overcome by cold and hunger, he takes the food the dogs bring him and is revived; and then they show him the way to the shelter and rest which he will find in that mountain home. Those dogs are good missionaries. They teach us the lesson of usefulness.

3. Another good thing that dogs sometimes teach us is *the lesson of returning good for evil.*

A gentleman had a dog whose name was Ponto. He had been a very useful dog to his master, who was very fond of him. But the time had come when Ponto was getting old. He was not able to do all that he had long been in the habit of doing. His master concluded to take him to the river and drown him. This was not a kind return to make to the dog for the faithful service of his life-time. But this was what his master had made up his mind to do. So he took Ponto down to the river. Then he put him in a boat and rowed out into the middle of the river. Here he tied a rope round Ponto's neck. A heavy stone was fastened at the other end of this rope, so as to sink the poor fellow when he was thrown into the river. Then he picked him up and pitched him into the water. But in doing this he lost his balance, and upset the boat, and was thrown into the river himself. He could not swim a stroke, and would have been drowned if it had not been for Ponto. For it happened that the stone fastened to the rope round his neck slipped out. This left him free to swim about. And when he saw his master struggling in the water, he took hold of him and brought him safe to shore. This touched the man's heart so that he took Ponto home again, and had him kindly cared for as long as he lived. This was a good lesson for a dog to teach. Let us be kind to dogs because of the lessons they teach.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE TIGER TRAP.

IT is very nice to look at a great big tiger like this, when we can see it, as we now do, in a picture. But it would not be quite so nice to meet him out in the jungles where he lives. It is very good in our heavenly Father not to let such a savage beast as the tiger is roam about in every place. If there were tigers in our woods we should never care to go into them. But God has been pleased to confine this fierce creature to one part of the world. The tiger is a native of India. He is seldom if ever found anywhere else. And it is only in certain parts of India that he is met with. His home is in what is called the jungles of India. The jungle is a sort of forest in India, where the trees and plants grow so close together that it is very hard to get through them. And these jungles are the places where the tigers love to dwell.

The picture now before us shows one of the ways in which the people in India catch the tiger.

When they merely want to kill them they adopt several different plans, of which we cannot speak; but when they wish to catch them alive, they use a trap like the one we see in our picture.

This is a large kind of cage. It is made of strong pieces of bamboo cane tightly bound together, and fastened in the ground near the tiger's den. This cage has a very heavy lid, with hinges to it on one side, and on the other a sort of spring lock, which fastens it securely when the lid falls down. A long rope is fastened to the upper end of this lid. The other end of this rope is held by a man who is hid away in the upper branches of a tree, near by, where he can keep watch upon the trap.

Inside the trap a looking-glass is placed, facing the front. A part of a dead animal is laid at the bottom of the trap as bait. The tiger smells the blood of the dead animal. This draws him to the trap. Then he sees his own likeness in the glass. He thinks it is another tiger trying to get the food which he wants for himself. He springs at the glass. The man in the tree pulls the rope. The heavy lid of the cage falls down. It is fastened by the spring, and the tiger is caught in the trap.

And what may we learn from this? We may learn some useful lessons. Satan is a great hunter. He is setting traps all the time for boys and girls,

and men and women. And this picture of the tiger trap shows us how easily we may be caught in one of the traps of Satan. There were two things in the tiger that led him into this trap. And we must watch against these if we wish to keep out of Satan's traps.

1. One thing that led to the tiger's being caught in this trap was his *selfishness.*

He thought there was another tiger trying to get that meat. He wanted it all for himself. He was not willing to share it with another. So he sprang at the tiger in the glass, and thus he was caught. One of Satan's traps, in which multitudes of souls are caught and lost, is covetousness. And nothing leads people into this trap more easily than selfishness. Here is an illustration :

There was once a rich farmer, who had a large barn full of wheat, at a time when there was a great famine in the country. He was not willing to sell his grain at a reasonable price at the beginning of the famine. He thought that if he kept it till all the other grain in his neighborhood had been sold, he would get a great deal more money for it. He did keep it till all the other wheat was gone. Then he asked a very high price for it. He opened his barn to sell his hoarded grain. But alas! a little insect had got into the grain and spoiled it. It was good for nothing. Thus he was caught in Satan's trap by his selfishness.

2. Another thing that led this tiger into the trap was *pride.*

He thought he saw another tiger. He wanted to show how much stronger he was than the other animal, and how easily he could conquer him. He flew at him in his pride, and was caught in the trap. And how many persons are caught in Satan's trap and ruined by pride.

This was the trap that Satan himself was caught in. He was once an angel in heaven. He was tempted by pride. This lost him his place in heaven. Adam lost his beautiful home in Paradise in the same way. And Pharaoh king of Egypt, and Saul king of Israel, and Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, were caught in Satan's trap by pride. Then let us watch against pride.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE SAILOR'S HOME.

HERE we have a picture of a sailor's home. On the right-hand side of the picture we see a good, large, pleasant-looking bed. Then there is a dog and a cat, that seem very much at home; and then there are the sailor's little children. How comfortable and happy they seem as they are playing with their boat, which makes them think of their dear father, who is far away over the sea. But then there is one other thing in this home which has more to do with the comfort of it than anything else in it. This is the wife of the absent sailor and the mother of his dear children. We see her in the picture. She is kneeling down, engaged in earnest prayer for all her loved ones.

The influence of a praying wife and mother, how great it is! We may speak of three things about this influence, of which it is pleasant to think.

1. The influence of prayer is *a far-reaching influence.* The God to whom we offer our prayer is always present in every place all round the world. Distance makes no difference to him. Here is a

good illustration of this point of our subject. We may call it *The Mother's Prayer Answered.*

A Christian widow in England had a son who was a soldier in the English army in India. Like most soldiers, he was a careless, God-forgetting man. The mother and the other children always remembered him in their prayers. They prayed that God would have mercy upon him and make him a Christian; and though he was so far away from them and the wide ocean rolled between them, they felt sure that God would hear and answer their prayers. And sure enough it turned out just so. He became serious. He began to read his Bible and to pray. He learned to love the Saviour. A great change was seen in him. He gave up all his evil ways, and became one of the best men in his regiment. His companions were very much surprised at what they saw in him. At last one of them asked him what had led to this great change. Then he took out of his pocket a letter which he had received from his mother, and read to him the closing words, which were these: "We are all praying for you, Charlie, that you may be a Christian." "Those are the words," said he, "that have led to this change; and now, by the help of God, I mean to go on as I have begun." Here we have an illustration of prayer reaching round the world. This shows us how truly its *influence is far-reaching.*

2. But, in the next place, prayer has *a protecting influence*, as well as one that is far-reaching.

When Daniel was cast into the lions' den it was in answer to his prayer for protection that "God sent his angel, and shut the lions' mouths, that they should not hurt him." (Daniel 6 : 22.) And so it was with his three friends when they were cast into the burning, fiery furnace. And we often meet with illustrations of the protecting power of prayer. Here is one. We may call it "*Lord Jesus, help!*"

A lady in one of our large cities was in the habit of going to church in the evening alone. Some of her friends told her it was not safe, and tried to prevent her from going; but she was very fond of her church, and was not willing to give up going. In coming home from church one evening, as she was crossing a public square, two robbers came up to her. Each presented a pistol to her and demanded her watch and money. They thought she was entirely alone; but there was one with her whom they knew not. As she had no earthly arm to protect her, she instantly fell on her knees before them, and lifting up her hands, exclaimed, "Now, Lord Jesus, help!" This was something which the robbers had not expected. They were frightened, and instantly turned round and walked away. And that Christian woman went home, rejoicing in the thought of the protection which God had given her in answer to her prayer.

Here is another illustration of the same kind. We may call it *Protection in Prayer.*

An English Christian family living in India engaged the services of a Hindoo girl as a sort of nurse to their children. She was kind and gentle and faithful, and they all learned to love her. She attended daily prayers in this family, and heard

the Scriptures read, and learned to know a good deal about the blessed Saviour whom the Christians worship. She was well acquainted with all the places in the neighborhood, and used to take the children out to walk every day. One day they walked much farther than usual, and, being tired, they all sat down on the grass to rest. While they were sitting, one of the children wandered away into the woods, and was soon out of sight. The nurse concluded to go after her; so, telling the other children to stay there till she returned, she started, calling out the name of the child as she

went. Presently her call was answered, and the child appeared, running towards her. But judge of her surprise and terror when just a little way beyond the child she saw a great, fierce-looking tiger coming up towards them. In a moment the brave-hearted girl ran and placed herself between the tiger and the child; and then, feeling that there was no help for them but in God, she threw herself on her knees, and offered this short prayer in great agony of feeling: "O my master's God, save my master's child, for Jesus' sake. Amen." Then, rising, from her knees and looking towards the tiger, she saw, to her great joy, that he had turned round and was quietly walking away into the forest. Here was protection given in answer to prayer.

3. *But then the influence of prayer is comforting* as well as far-reaching and protecting. God teaches us to expect this when he gives us that sweet promise, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me" (Ps. 50:15). And to show how true this promise is, David says, "I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears" (Ps. 34:4). And Abraham and Jacob and Moses and Samuel and nearly all the servants of God mentioned in the Bible give us examples of the way in which they found comfort in prayer. I have just one other story, to show the comforting influence there is

in prayer. We may call it *The Prayerful Child and its Ring.*

A little boy had a bright and beautiful ring given him by his mother. He prized it greatly, and used to carry it about with him wherever he went. But one day he was unfortunate enough to lose his ring. This distressed him greatly. He cried for awhile over his loss as though his heart would break; but after awhile, recollecting himself and what he had been taught about prayer, he went to his own little room, and kneeled down to pray. He asked God either to enable him to find his ring or else help him to bear the loss of it with patience and comfort. Then he went down stairs again, looking very bright and cheerful. His sister asked him what he had been doing. He told her he had been praying about his lost ring. She laughed at him, and said, "What's the use of praying about a lost ring? Will praying bring it back again?" "Perhaps not," said the little fellow; "but praying has done this much for me," said he: "it has made me feel quite willing to do without it if it is God's will, and this is almost as good as having it back again." And this shows us the comforting influence of prayer.

And so when we think of prayer let us remember that its influence is *far-reaching, protecting,* and *comforting.*

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE DEER'S LESSON.

THIS picture took the premium at the School of Design connected with the New York Cooper Institute. A great many of the pictures that young people see are of scenes in England or other parts of Europe; but here we have an original American picture. Now let us take a good look at it, because it is an American picture.

The scene which it represents is just such as may often be witnessed in the Adirondacks or in many other parts of the wild woods of our country. A deer has been shot by the hunters. The poor creature has fallen to the ground, and its life's blood is ebbing away from the wound which the hunter's bullet has made. One of its companions has approached its side. It sees that its friend is in distress, and feels sorry for it. But it has no words in which to express its sorrow. It can only do this by its actions. And so it has come slowly up to the side of its suffering companion. It has looked at it awhile, and then, bending down its head, it gently licks the wound from which the

blood is flowing. This is the only way in which the deer can show its sympathy for its suffering and dying companion. But this does show it. This action seems to say, as plainly as if it expressed it in words, "I am very sorry for you, my friend. I wish I could do something to help and to relieve you; but that is not in my power. All I can do is to assure you in this way that I do sympathize with you." Now take another good look at the deer in the picture, and see if this is not just what it seems to represent. The lesson this deer teaches us is *the lesson of sympathy.*

And there are three good reasons why we should all try to learn and preach this lesson.

1. One reason why we should do this is *because it is so honorable.*

I know how boys sometimes think it may do very well for women and girls to show sympathy, but that it is not the thing for boys, because it is not manly. But this is a great mistake. The most perfect pattern of true manliness our world has ever known is found in the life of our blessed Saviour. But he was full of sympathy. When he stood beside the grave of his friend Lazarus, we read that "*Jesus wept,*" although he knew that he was going to raise him from the dead immediately. That showed the sympathy that Jesus had for those in suffering or sorrow, and it was always so with him. His life was full of illustrations

of the same sort. And when we learn and practice the lesson of sympathy for those in suffering, we are doing the most honorable thing that we can do, because we are imitating the example of Jesus.

2. But we ought to learn this lesson of sympathy, in the next place, *because it is so useful.*

To show sympathy to those who are in trouble will often comfort them more, and so be more useful to them, than anything else we could do.

A good Christian mother was in the habit of talking to her children, when they went to bed at night, about what they had been doing during the day. She had a little girl about seven or eight years old, who was trying to be a Christian. One night her mother said to her, "Well, Nellie, tell me what you have done to-day." "Not much," said Nellie. "As I was sitting in my place at school before the exercises began, Carrie Jones, who sits next to me, came in. She had not been to school for a week, and she looked very sad. I asked her what was the matter. She said they had just buried her little brother. Then she covered her face with her hands, and, bowing her head on the desk, she cried as if her heart would break, and I did not know what to do or say. So I put my head down close to hers, and I cried too. After awhile she wiped away her tears, and said I had done her a great deal of good. But I don't know how that could be," said Nellie, "for I only

cried with her." Her mother told her that it was the sympathy she had showed for her friend in her trouble which had done her good. And we ought to learn and practice this lesson of sympathy *because it is so useful.*

3. And then we ought to learn this lesson *because it is so profitable.* One of God's commands is "Be ye kind one to another" (Eph. 4 : 32). Another is "Weep with them that weep" (Rom. 12 : 15). And David tells us that in keeping God's commandments "*there is* great reward" (Ps. 19 : 11). This means that God will bless those who keep his commandments, and his blessing is the most profitable thing we can have. And if there is *honor* and *usefulness* and *profit* in this lesson, we ought to learn it.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE HAPPY FAMILY.

HERE we have a nice picture of a pussy cat with a family of little ones about her. But look and see. They are not little ones of the same kind that pussy herself belongs to. No, but they are little squirrels. This seems very strange. Now we know that cats are generally ready to fly at squirrels and eat them up as soon as they see them. But the cat in our picture is doing no such thing. She has a family of three little squirrels about her, and she does not seem at all inclined to eat them. On the contrary they are climbing over her and playing about her, and she looks as pleased as possible. The cat seems happy, and the squirrels seem happy, and they all seem happy together. And so we may well speak of them as "The Happy Family."

And surely, if creatures so different from each other in their nature and habits as cats and squirrels can live together in peace and make a happy family, then all families that are made up of Christian boys and girls and men and women,

ought to be happy families. But we all know very well that this is not the case. You, or I, or all of us know many such families that are far from being happy. There must be something in the way of their being happy. What can it be that prevents happiness? Three things may be mentioned, any one of which, if allowed, will surely have this effect.

1. The first that must prevent any family from being happy is *disobedience.*

See, here is a watch. Let us open the case and look at the works inside of it. How many wheels are there! They are all moving slowly on. We hear it going tick, tick, tick. While the works go smoothly on, and the watch is keeping time, it is like a happy family. But suppose we drop just one little grain of sand in among those wheels. What a tiny thing a grain of sand is! What harm can such a little thing as that do? We shall see. Presently you lift the watch up to your ear and listen. The ticking has ceased. The watch has stopped. And what has made it stop? Why that grain of sand. The main spring is not broken. The watch has not run down. You may wind it up if you please, but it will do no good. That grain of sand makes one of the wheels stand still. And that one wheel standing still stops the watch. The works of the watch will not go on again until that grain of sand is taken out of it.

Now every family is like a watch. And each member of the family is like one of the wheels of the watch. And a family can only be made happy, as a watch can only keep time, when all the wheels are in motion. If one member of the family refuses to obey orders, it will be like the grain of sand in the watch. The works must stand still. The watch will not keep time. Disobedience will destroy the happiness of any family. If you wish to do what you can to make the family in which you live a happy one, learn to obey.

2. Another thing that will destroy the happiness of any family is *bad temper.*

Did you ever see a porcupine? It is a little animal about as big as a rabbit; only instead of the rabbit's soft, smooth fur, the porcupine is covered with a coat of quills. These are stiff and sharp-pointed. Generally these quills lie flat down like the feathers of a bird. But when anything disturbs the little animal, it has the power of making these quills stick out all over its body. If you touch it, these sharp quills will stick you like pins. What a disagreeable little animal a porcupine must be to have near one! Suppose that a porcupine should be put in the place of one of the little squirrels in our picture. And suppose that every time one of the squirrels came near while playing it should get angry, and stick out all its sharp-pointed quills. How very unpleasant that

would be! This would not be a happy family any longer.

And bad-tempered boys and girls in a family are just like porcupines. Their temper makes them as disagreeable to those about them as a porcupine is when he sticks out his sharp quills, so that no one can touch him or come near him without being hurt. If we want to make the family in which we live a happy one, we must watch against a bad temper.

3. And then another thing that will prevent any family from being happy is *selfishness.*

There are two boys playing see-saw. But they do not seem to get on very well. Let us go up to them and see if we can find out what is the cause of the trouble. There is the plank they are playing with, and under it is the big stone or rock on which the plank rests. Now to make see-sawing go on well, the rock on which the plank rests ought to be just in the middle of the plank. But it is not so here. One of the boys has a much longer piece of the plank on his side of the rock than his brother has. This spoils the play. The plank won't work in this way. And what is the cause of this? Why, that is a selfish boy. He is not willing to let his brother have as much of the plank as he has himself. And that is one of many ways in which selfishness will prevent any family from being happy.

Two little girls named Susie and Addie lived very happily together. A lady visiting them asked Susie one day how they managed to get on so pleasantly. The answer was, "Why, Addie lets me, and I let Addie." If you want to have a happy family, watch against these three things: disobedience, bad temper, and selfishness.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LESSONS FROM THE FOXES.

THE Bible teaches us that we may learn valuable lessons from all God's creatures. Solomon tells us to "go to the ant" (Prov. 6 : 6) for the lesson of industry. When the prophet Isaiah wanted the Jews to know that God was their owner, he sent them to the ox and the ass that they might learn this lesson (Isa. 1 : 3). When our blessed Saviour wished to show how we ought to trust in God, he made the birds our teachers, and sent us to learn this lesson from "the fowls of the air" (Matt. 6 : 26).

Now let us look at the picture before us. Here are two foxes playing. Are there any useful lessons for us to learn from these foxes? Think of Solomon's words when he says, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines" (Cant. 2 : 15). Three questions are started here for us to answer. These will teach us some useful lessons.

1. The first question is this: *What are foxes like?*

They are like *sins*. And the "little foxes" here

spoken of are like little sins. These may refer to the sins we have when we are young.

a. One reason why foxes may be compared to sin, is because *they have dens to hide in.* Jesus said, "Foxes have holes" (Matt. 8 : 20). Here they hide away ; and when they are hidden in their holes it is very hard to find them. And so it is with our sins. Our hearts are the dens or holes in which they hide themselves. If the foxes could be kept out of their holes, it would be easy to "take" them. But when they creep in there and hide away, it is very hard to get at them.

If I were a farmer, and had a den of foxes on my farm, I never should rest till I could get that den cleaned out. And so we should feel about our hearts where sins lie hid away. We should bring them to Jesus, and say with David, each one for himself, "Create in me a clean heart, O God ; and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. 51 : 10).

b. And then foxes are like sins again, because *they are very sly.* There is nothing for which the fox is more noted than for its cunning or its slyness. It will lie or cheat, and steal, and it will lie and cheat in order that it may steal. And so it is with sin. It calls things by wrong names. This is lying. It pretends to be what it is not. This is cheating. And it does this on purpose to destroy our peace, our happiness, and our hope of heaven. This is the worst sort of stealing.

And so, in answer to the first question, What are foxes like? we may well say they are like sins.

2. But the second question is, *What should we do with foxes?*

Solomon says, "*Take* the foxes." This means *catch* them. We can do nothing with them till we catch them. And it is so with our sins. We should find out *what* they are and *where* they are, and then we should try to get hold of them and conquer them. Here is work for all young persons. Every boy and girl has something to do here. And the sooner we begin the better. Solomon was wise when he said, "Take the LITTLE foxes." We cannot do this of ourselves. We need the help of God's grace and Spirit in taking these little foxes, or in catching and conquering our sins. And if we pray heartily for this help, we shall certainly get it. See what a sweet promise there is in Isaiah 41 : 10. Here God says to you, and me, and every one who is trying to serve him, "Fear thou not; for . . . I will help thee." And he always means what he says. His promises are made not to be broken, but to be kept. Jesus said, "The Scripture cannot be broken" (John 10 : 35). Then let us all begin at once to "take the little foxes." The second question is, What should we do with the foxes? The answer to it is, We should take or catch them.

3. The third question is, *Why should we do this?*

There is reason enough for doing this when we know that they "spoil the vines." These "little foxes" gnaw off the bark from the vines; they break off the young twigs; they eat the grapes before they are ripe; they scratch up the soil from the roots; and in these and other ways they "spoil the vines." This is reason enough for taking or catching the "little foxes." And it is just so with our sins, which these foxes represent. Solomon says, "One sinner destroyeth much good" (Eccl. 9 : 18). One boy or girl who tells lies, or uses bad words, or sets an example of disobedience, may do more harm in a family or school than any one can tell. Then let us all watch out for "the little foxes" in the garden of our hearts, and let us ask God to help us in taking and destroying them. Then our vines will grow and prosper.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A TALK ABOUT BEARS.

THE family of bears is quite a large family. It is divided into several branches. One of these is known as the *brown* bear. This is found chiefly in Europe and Asia. Then there is another branch of this family known as the *black* bear, or the American bear. This is found in many parts of our own country. Great numbers of these bears are killed for their skins. The skin of the black bear has a smooth, glossy fur, and is much used for making cloaks and caps and such things. And then, in the Rocky Mountains, there is another branch of the bear family known as the *grizzly* bear. This is a larger animal, and much more savage than the black bear. One of these bears will sometimes measure nine feet from its nose to its tail.

But the largest bear of the family is that called the *polar* bear. This is the one represented in our picture. These bears are sometimes found ten feet in length, and five feet high. We may learn two

useful lessons from what we know about the polar bear.

1. One of these is *the lesson of trust.*

One thing about the polar bears which teaches us this lesson is (*a*) *the way they are clothed.* They are called *polar* bears because they live near the North Pole. It is very cold there. Look at our picture. One of the bears here is on the ice; the other is in the water, and that is about as cold as ice. We should find it too cold for us to live there with any comfort. But these bears get on very nicely. They feel quite at home on the ice or in the ice-water: and well they may; for God has taken care to clothe them in such a way that they do not feel the cold. They have nice white coats of long, thick, heavy fur. Thus they are fitted for living comfortably in that cold region. God knew just what they would need, and he has kindly provided for their need. And when we think of this, we may well learn to trust our Father in heaven, who takes such good care of all his creatures. The way the bears are clothed is one thing about them which teaches us this lesson.

And then another thing which teaches the same lesson is (*b*) *the way they are fed.* If you and I were living up where these polar bears live, we should find it very hard to get our "daily bread," or what the Bible calls "food convenient for us."

If a committee of our best and wisest men were

appointed to attend to feeding all the bears up in that frozen region, they would have a hard time of it, and *so would the poor bears.* Many of them would starve every winter, and the family of the polar bears would soon die out. But, as Jesus said of the birds, we may say of the bears: "Your heavenly Father feedeth them."

Look what a nice fat seal that bear on the ice has under his big paws! That will be enough to make a real good meal for those two bears. And in the water round about where they live, they always find the kind of food that suits them, and as much of it as they need. What a beautiful illustration we have here of the meaning of David's words, when he looked up to God in the very spirit of trust of which we are speaking, and said: "Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing" (Ps. 145 : 16).

And when we think of the way in which these bears are clothed, and the way in which they are fed, we may well learn from them *the lesson of trust.*

2. The other lesson we may learn from these polar bears is *the lesson of affection.*

They live in such a cold country, and they look so hard and savage, that we should hardly expect to find anything kind, or tender, or loving in them. But we do find it. Their fondness for their young is very remarkable. When their little ones have been killed, instead of going off and

leaving them without any concern, they show the greatest affection for them. They will stay by them, and lick them with their tongues, and fondle them, and whine pitifully over them, and will even allow themselves to be taken rather than forsake them. And this is a good lesson for us to learn from the polar bears. Let us be kind to all about us, and especially to the young and the helpless. And when we hear about the polar bears, let us think of these two lessons that they teach us—*the lesson of trust* and *the lesson of affection.*

We may learn a good lesson from *the Story of Two Bears.*—A man and his wife had both joined the church. They had long been known in the neighborhood where they lived for their bad tempers and frequent quarrels. But now a great change had come over them. Their home was a home of peace. A friend asked the husband one day, "How do you manage to get along so pleasantly?" "We do it," said he, "by keeping two bears in our house." "What two bears?" "Why *bear* and *forbear;* these keep us from quarreling." Let us all keep these two bears about us. Then we shall live in peace. "*Be* kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another. . . . If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. . . . Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12 : 10, 18, 21).

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE BEST GARDENER.

THIS little girl is watering the flowers she has in her garden. We do not know who this girl is, nor the history of her garden and its flowers. If we did, it might be interesting to give her history, and tell what her name is and where she lives and all about her. But this cannot be done. Yet the picture suggests a passage of Scripture which it may be worth our while to refer to and talk a little about.

In the 27th chapter of Isaiah, 2d and 3d verses, God compares his church to a vineyard or garden, and speaks of himself as having the charge of it. This brings him before us in very much the same relation which the little girl in our picture sustains to the flowers in her garden. We see her acting as a gardener. And this is the way in which God teaches us to think of him, in the passage of Scripture just referred to. Here the garden spoken of means the church of God. And this is the relation he sustains to the whole church. But then what is true of the church is true of every member of it.

Every promise made to the whole church is made to each member of it. And it is just so with the sweet promise found in the passage of which we are speaking.

If we are trying to love and serve Jesus, then we are plants or flowers in his garden, and God will be our Gardener; and it is very pleasant to know that he is indeed *The Best Gardener.*

There are *three* things connected with him which we can easily see must make him such a gardener.

1. One of these is *his constant presence.*

In spring-time and in summer a garden needs the constant presence of the gardener if it is to be kept in a flourishing state. But earthly gardeners cannot be always present in their gardens. They often have to go away to attend to other things. At times they may be unexpectedly prevented from getting back as soon as they intended, and during their absence the garden may suffer, the plants and flowers may wither and die. But this can never happen in God's garden; and the reason is that he is never absent from it. *We* never can be present in *two* places at the same time; but God can be always present, not in *two* places only at the same time, but in *every* place. This is one of the most marvelous things about him, and one in which he differs altogether from all his people. We cannot understand this, but we know that it is so. In summer and in winter, by day and by night, he is

present in his garden and present with every plant and flower there. And his *constant presence* is one thing that makes him *The Best Gardener.*

2. Another thing which helps to give him this character is *his unceasing care.*

An earthly gardener may be present in his garden continually, and yet may forget or neglect to give to the plants and flowers there the care and attention that they require. His mind may be so occupied with other things that he may not water them or do such other things as are needed for their proper growth. Solomon speaks of going by the vineyard or garden of the sluggard, and finding it all grown over with thorns and covered with nettles (Prov. 24 : 30-32). It was the want of proper care which caused that garden thus to suffer. But this can never happen in God's garden. He waters it every moment. This means that he never forgets it. He is always thinking about it and taking care of it. He says, "Lest *any* hurt it, I will keep it night and day" (Isaiah 27 : 3). This is wonderful. And if we are in God's garden, it is pleasant to think that this is the kind of care he takes of every plant and flower there. And so when we think of *his unceasing care,* we see how well he may be called "The Best Gardener."

3. And then the other thing which shows this is *his unfailing power.*

An earthly gardener may be present in his gar-

den all the time, and may never cease caring for it, and yet many things may happen to injure his garden which he has no power to prevent. The frost may blight his plants, the sun may scorch them, or the insects may destroy them, without his being able to prevent it. But nothing like this can happen to any of the plants or flowers in God's garden. He has power, that never fails, to protect and keep and bless his garden. And when we put these three things together and think of his constant presence, his unceasing care, and his unfailing power, we see how well he may be called "The Best Gardener."

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE DANGER OF TEMPTATION.

HERE is a picture of a boy in trouble. He is known as "Meddlesome Tom." This name was given to him because he was all the time doing things that he ought not to do, and so was always getting into trouble. The picture itself gives a good illustration of this. One day Tom's father had a curious thing called "a galvanic battery" brought into his study. We see this on the table in the picture. It is like a box, with plates of glass standing upright in the midst of a strange sort of liquid that fills the box. Then there are long wires connected with this box. These have smooth handles at the end of them. And when the machine is in order, if a person takes hold of these handles it has a very strange effect upon him. Tom had heard a great deal about this machine. He made up his mind to go in and look at it. He did so when there was no one there. He gazed at it awhile in wonder. And then, though he had been told not to touch it, he could not resist the temptation to meddle with it. So

he took hold of the handles. The moment he did so, he felt as if he was in the hands of a great giant who was sticking pins and needles into his hands and arms. He was terribly frightened, and screamed out as loud as he could. His father heard him. He came in and loosed his hands from the machine. The rest of the family laughed at him, and Tom crept away to his room feeling very much ashamed of himself.

Now, there may be no such machine in our house. We may have no temptation like this to meet. But we shall find other temptations in our daily paths into which we shall be in danger of falling. And if we give way to these temptations we shall surely get into trouble, as Tom did by meddling with that galvanic battery.

Let us look at two of these.

1. One danger that we all have to meet continually, is *the temptation of untruthfulness.*

What a happy thing it is for a boy or girl to be known as *truthful!* One of the first things for all us to do is to try to get this character for ourselves. But we cannot do it without trying. And our trying will not be worth much unless we ask God to help us. We are born with sinful hearts. And one of the ways in which this sinfulness shows itself is by not always telling the truth. David understood this as well as anybody. And when he was speaking of children generally, he

said, "They go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies" (Ps. 58 : 3).

And then, in addition to these sinful hearts, there is Satan at hand to tempt us to speak lying words. Lying is part of his business. He is "the father of lies." He told the first lie ever spoken in our world, when he contradicted God and said to our mother, Eve, "Ye shall not surely die." And who wants to go into partnership with Satan? Yet this is what we do when we tell a lie.

There are two texts from the Bible that should keep every boy and girl from ever telling a lie. One is Prov. 12 : 22. Here we read that "Lying lips *are* abomination to the Lord." Who wants to be an abomination to the Lord? And yet this is what we must be if we tell lies. Think of that when tempted to say what is not true.

The other text that should keep us from telling lies is Rev. 22 : 15. Here the apostle John has been speaking about heaven. After describing that bright and beautiful place, he tells us of different kinds of people who can never enter there. And among others he says that "whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" must remain outside of that blessed place. Let us think of these two passages of Scripture whenever we are tempted to say what is not true; and let us pray God for grace to resist the temptation to untruthfulness.

2. And then another danger that will often meet us is *the temptation to dishonesty.*

A gentleman had two boys who were doing little jobs of work for him during the week. On Saturday night he settled with them for their work. On the way home, as they counted out their money, they found that they each had a quarter of a dollar more than belonged to them. One of them said "he guessed he'd keep it, for he had worked hard enough for it."

The other boy took his quarter straight back and returned it to the owner. Now it turned out that it was not a mistake on the part of the gentleman. He did it on purpose to find out if the boys were honest. The boy who kept the quarter proved that he was dishonest, and the gentleman never employed him again. The other boy showed that he was honest. He found steady work, and was finally taken into the business.

Let us be truthful and honest, and then we shall prosper.

CHAPTER XXX.

DISAPPOINTMENTS, AND HOW TO MEET THEM.

LOOK at the boy in this picture. He is finding out what it is to be disappointed. He had come home hungry for his dinner. His mother had given him a dish of milk with some boiled potatoes in it. He had taken a seat on the ground under the grape-vine arbor, near the house, and was just going to have a good time in eating his dinner, when two big, greedy geese came along. They wanted to get some of the dinner out of that dish; and before the little fellow has had a taste of his good things, one of the geese has upset the dish. The milk is spilled, and the potatoes are sent rolling away in the dirt. What a disappointment this was to that hungry boy!

And something like this we must all expect to meet with in this life. Let us look at some examples of disappointment.

1. *The Baby's Disappointment.*—A nurse is walking on the porch, with a baby in her arms, one moonlight night. The baby sees the moon shining up in the sky. It has no idea how big the

moon is, nor how far away it is. It stretches out its little hands to grasp that bright and beautiful thing the moon, but cannot do it. It tries again and again, but in vain; then it bursts into tears. That is the baby's first disappointment.

2. *The Boy and his Kite.*—A gentleman was walking along a road in the country. He saw a little boy sitting on the grassy bank by the side of the road and crying bitterly. There was a kite lying on the grass near the boy. Thinking that perhaps somebody had been hurting the little fellow, the gentleman went up to him and said very kindly, "What's the matter, my little man?"

With the big tears rolling down his cheeks, the boy looked up to the gentleman and said, "I can't make my kite go up, sir."

The gentleman tried to comfort him, and then, as he went on his way, he said to himself, "Ah, this little fellow is beginning to find out something about the disappointments of life!"

These are illustrations of some of the ways in which young people meet with disappointments. And when we grow up to be men and women, we shall meet them still in other forms. Now, what do we need to enable us to meet disappointments in the best way?

There are two things we need in order to do this.

1. *We need help.*

We do not know what this little boy did when he lost his dinner. He went to his mother, perhaps, and asked her to give him some more. That would be about the best help he could get under his disappointment. But how are we to get help when disappointments come to us?

We must ask God to help us. And he has promised to do it. In Isaiah 41 : 10 God says, "I will help thee." Meeting disappointments is like carrying a heavy burden. Now, suppose you are carrying a heavy burden along the street. Presently you feel tired, and are glad to lay it down and rest. It is so heavy that you cannot carry it any further. Just then your Sunday-school teacher comes along. He sees the trouble you are in, and says, "Come along, John; I'll take hold of the bundle and help you carry it." Then you would get along nicely. Or suppose that, instead of taking hold of your bundle, he was able to give you the strength to carry it comfortably yourself: that would be giving you just the help you needed.

Now this is what God has promised to do. In that verse from Isaiah referred to above, God says to you and me, "Fear thou not; for I *am* with thee: be not dismayed: for I *am* thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee." God can do this very easily; and when we meet with disappointments, when we have hard things to do or

heavy burdens to bear, if we go and pray to him, and tell him what we need, he will fulfill his promise, and will give us *strength* and *help*.

2. But when we meet with disappointments, *we need hope.*

Suppose that when this little boy ran in and told his mother how he had lost his dinner, she had said to him, "Never mind, Charley; just take that little basket and go to the grocery store in the village, and get me some rice and sugar and tea, and when you come back I'll have another dinner ready for you, a great deal nicer than the one you lost."

That would make Charley feel fine. The hope of getting that nice dinner would be a great comfort to him. He would get the basket and go to the grocery, whistling merrily all the way. And as he went he would be thinking all the time about the nice dinner he was to have when he came home. The hope of getting what his mother had promised would help him to bear his disappointment cheerfully. And this is the way in which God deals with us. The Bible is full of good things which God has promised to give us when we get home to heaven. And the hope of getting those good things should make us feel patient and cheerful when we meet with disappointments.

CHAPTER XXXI.

OUR FATHER'S CARE.

THE snow is falling, and everything around this young girl is covered by the white mantle which it forms. She has put on her hat and gone out of doors to take a look at things, while the snow is coming gently down. But it is not mere frolic or play that she is after. What a good-natured, kind-looking face she has! And see, in her right hand she has a little twig, plucked from a holly bush, with leaves and berries on it. Her eye is fixed on that little bird, which has perched itself on the slender branch of that sawed-off-tree, just above the top of the fence. The dear child has only thoughts of kindness in her mind. It is very clear she is bent on helping that little bird to its breakfast, from the red berries of the holly. I wonder if she is not a member of S. P. C. A., or the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals? If she is not, I am sure she would make a good member, for you can almost see kindness to animals written on her honest, beaming face.

When we look at a little bird amidst a wintry scene like this, the question naturally comes up, how do the birds manage to live through the cold, dark, wintry days, when the earth is wrapped in snow?

Few things illustrate "our Father's care" so sweetly as the way in which birds are provided for, in the goodness of God, during the winter season. Our Saviour gave us this illustration, in his Sermon on the Mount, when he said: "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them" (Matt. 6 : 26).

There are three ways in which God provides for the birds in winter, and each of them shows his loving care.

1. One way of doing this is by *migration.*

To migrate means to go from one country to another. God has taught many of our birds to do this. Before cold weather comes these birds get together in large companies. They hold as it were a bird's convention. Some of them seem to make speeches. They arrange a plan to leave all together, and fly away to some warm country where they can find plenty of food. At a given signal they start. They spend the winter in that sunny climate, and then come back in the spring.

From the southern parts of Europe the birds go over to Africa, and spend the winter there.

In doing this they have to fly all the way across the Mediterranean Sea. That is a long journey for such little creatures to take. When once they start upon it there is no place for them to stop and rest. They cannot get a drop of water to drink nor a morsel of food to eat till they get through. They cannot *see* where they are going to when they begin their journey. They have no compass, like the sailor, to steer by. And yet they never miss their way. God always carries them safely through. What a beautiful illustration of "our Father's care" we have in the way in which birds are provided for by their migration!

2. Another way in which birds are provided for in the winter is *by the opening of God's hand.*

In the berries of the holly bushes, and the cedar trees, and in other things of the same kind, which God has caused to grow in the fields, and gardens, and forests of the land, the hardy little birds which remain with us during the winter find their daily food. And most of this food is hung up on the trees, so that, even when the snow comes, it does not all get covered up. The hungry little birds can always find it there.

And it is a very sweet way of speaking of this that David makes use of, when he compares the provision thus made for the supply of these dumb creatures to the opening of God's hand. This is what he means when he says, "Thou openest thine

hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing" (Ps. 145 : 16). And then, as we look at them thoughtfully, each of these berries, while the branch that holds it is swaying in the wind, will seem to speak to us tenderly and lovingly of "our Father's care."

3. The third way in which God provides for the birds in winter is *by opening the hearts of his people.*

How many good, kind people there are in our large cities who are in the habit, every morning, of throwing a lot of crumbs of bread on the pavement in front of their dwellings, or in their yards; and multitudes of little birds watch for these crumbs, and find their support in them from day to day. But it is God that puts the thought of doing this into the hearts of his people. All good thoughts come from him. And so it is true, if we look at it rightly, that every crumb of bread thus thrown to the little birds, will seem to speak to us of "our Father's care."

And even in doing so little a thing as this, we may find pleasure in feeling that we are a part of God's great plan. In my quiet little country home at Mount Airy I have a lot of nice pigeons. The first thing after breakfast every morning, I take a pail of water and go out to the barn to feed them. They are always waiting for me on the roof of the barn. The moment they see me they

all fly together to meet me. In the noisy flapping of their wings I can almost hear them say, "Hurrah! boys, here comes the good fellow that brings us our breakfast!" Then they fly back to the barn, and before I can mount up into the loft they are all there, looking at me with their little heads cunningly turned aside, as much as to say, "Here we are, sir, ready for breakfast!" And I feel it a real pleasure to help supply the wants of these little creatures of God.

And so, when we think of the different ways in which God provides for the birds, by migration, by opening his hand, and by opening the hearts of his people, we may see in each an illustration of "our Father's care."

CHAPTER XXXII.

ICEBERGS.

HERE is a picture of a scene on board of one of our ocean steamers. She is sailing over what are known as "the banks of Newfoundland." Our steamers cross these banks in going to Europe and in returning. And, at certain seasons of the year, it is in this part of the ocean that icebergs are met with. There is a current of water that flows down from the Polar Sea, and runs across or near these "banks of Newfoundland." And when those great masses of ice are broken off from the glaciers or frozen rivers of the far-off North, they float out to sea, and this current carries them down along in the direction of our great continent, till, finally, they melt away in the warm sunshine of the South.

The steamer in our picture has come in sight of icebergs. Some of the passengers have met together on the quarter-deck to have a good look at the icebergs, as the steamer is sailing by them. A jolly-looking old sailor is pointing them out to the passengers, who are looking eagerly at them. The

old gentleman is using the spy-glass to get a better view.

Now suppose that you and I were on board this steamer. We join the company on deck, who are gazing at the icebergs. And what do we see in them? If we looked at them, and thought of them aright, we might see in those great floating masses of ice three instructive lessons.

1. In the first place, we might see a *lesson of beauty* in those icebergs. For one thing, there would be beauty in their *size*. They rise out of the water like mountains of ice. Sometimes they will be one, two, or three hundred feet high above the surface of the water. And then they will go down into the depths of the sea further even than they rise above it. This makes them really wonderful in their *size*.

But then their *form* or *shape* is beautiful as well as their size. Sometimes these icebergs are seen in the distance looking just like great white temples, with their spires and steeples sparkling in the sunshine, as they go floating along. Then you see what beauty there is in the *form* or *shape* of the icebergs.

But it is especially in their *color* that their beauty appears. Of course icebergs are made of frozen snow and water, and so in general their color is white. But as the sun shines on the ice the rays are decomposed, just as they often are by a prism

glass. And this brings out all the colors of the rainbow. You see the blue and the purple, the orange, the green, and the rest of the seven colors all blending beautifully together there. This has a very fine effect. And as you stand and gaze on those floating masses of ice sailing slowly by in their varied colors, you cannot help exclaiming, "How beautiful!" Thus we have a lesson of beauty in the icebergs.

2. We look at them again, and they teach us a *lesson of danger.* Suppose that a steamer, under a full head of steam, or a sailing vessel, under full sail, should run against an iceberg at night. What would the effect be? Very bad for the vessel. Many a vessel has been seriously injured in this way. Sometimes the injury has been so great that the vessel has suddenly sunk—going down into the deep waters with all on board. Not a word has ever been heard of any of the passengers, the officers, or the crew. They are reported as "missing," and that is all their sorrowing friends will ever know about them in this world. How sad this is!

But these icebergs, floating out to sea, and involving so much danger to passing vessels, may well remind us of the dangers to which we are exposed in our voyage over the sea of life. The temptations we meet with here, bring dangers to us as great as those which the icebergs bring to

passing vessels. When we are tempted to disobey our parents, to break the Sabbath, or to act dishonestly, there is danger in these things that may lead to our injury or ruin as surely and as suddenly as vessels are injured or sunk by dashing against an iceberg. And when we see a real iceberg or the picture of one, it may well remind us of this lesson of danger.

3. But there is also a *lesson of safety* suggested to us by looking at these icebergs. I remember once, when at sea, and walking up and down the quarter-deck with the captain of the vessel, I asked him to tell me frankly if he ever felt afraid at sea. His reply was: "I do not feel afraid of the winds or the waves. But there are several things of which I confess I do feel afraid. And among these are the icebergs. To run against one of them at night would be horrible. But I know it is only at a certain season of the year and in a certain part of the ocean that there is any danger of meeting icebergs. And if I am sailing over that part of the ocean at the season when icebergs are to be met with, I am always very watchful about them. And there is one way in which you can always tell if they are about, even before you see them. They make the water in the sea colder than it would be if they were not there. And so, when I think that icebergs may be near, I have a bucket of water drawn from the sea several times

a day, and put the thermometer in to see how cold it is. I know what the temperature of the water is in those parts generally. And if I find it getting several degrees colder than usual, then I know that the icebergs are near, and I keep a bright lookout for them."

I have never forgotten that captain's words. And here the lesson of safety from the icebergs comes to us. We are liable to meet the icebergs of temptation at all times and in every part of the sea of life. The Bible must be our thermometer. If we make a right use of it, it will always tell us when we are in danger from sin, and will show us the way of escape from it.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

TAKING IN THE FLYING JIB.

THIS picture represents two sailors out on what is called the bowsprit of a vessel. The bowsprit is that part of a vessel which is shaped like the mast, but which, instead of being set upright, as the mast is, projects in a slanting direction over the front or bow of the vessel. What is called the flying jib is a long, narrow, three-cornered sail at the farthest end of the bowsprit. In our picture this sail has been hauled down, and the sailors are engaged in rolling it up and fastening it to the bowsprit. The flying jib is a sail that is only used in good weather. When the wind blows too fresh, or there are signs of a storm coming on, one of the first things the sailors do is to take in this sail. And this may teach us a good lesson. Our life is often compared to the ocean. We are all sailors making our way across this ocean. When there is danger near, and we try properly to meet that danger, it may well be said of us that we are "taking in the flying jib."

We may speak of three ways of doing this.

1. One of the ways in which this may be done is by *remembering God's presence.*

We know very well that God is present everywhere. We all profess to believe this. When we read what David says about this in the 139th Psalm, we admit at once that it is true. "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou *art* there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou *art there. If* I take the wings of the morning, *and* dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me. Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light *are* both alike *to thee.*"

This is very beautiful, and we all believe it. But we do not all remember it, and live and act as though we really believed it. If we could only feel that the great, all-seeing eye of God was looking at us all the time, wherever we go, how many wrong things that we do every day should we be kept from doing! Like Joseph, when tempted to do what is wrong, we should be ready to say, "How . . . can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" It is dangerous to forget the great truth that "Thou God seest me." Let us pray for

grace to remember God's presence, and then we shall be "taking in the flying jib."

2. We may do this again by *breaking up bad habits.*

It is very easy to get into the way of doing what is wrong. It may not be quite so easy to do a wrong thing at first, but if we go on doing it for a little while we soon form the habit of doing it, and then we go on in that way almost without knowing it.

The story is told of a miser who had so long been in the habit of stealing from others, that one day he stole a guinea out of his own pocket, and laughed at his smartness when he put it into his iron chest and locked it safely up there. There is nothing more dangerous than a bad habit. We must watch and pray against our bad habits if we wish to break them up. This was what David was doing when he looked up to God and said, "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if *there be any* wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Psalm 139 : 23, 24). And when by the help of God we are enabled to break up any bad habits that we have fallen into, then it may be said that we are "taking in the flying jib."

3. And then we may do this again by *refusing to follow bad examples.*

An orphan boy named George applied for a

situation in a store. The merchant liked his looks and was on the point of engaging him, when he saw a segar sticking out of his coat pocket. Then he said, "You won't do for me, my lad. I don't want a boy that smokes." George had some companions who had learned to smoke, and he was following their bad example. He was greatly distressed at the thought of losing the place he wanted to get. He went to his room, threw himself on his bed, and burst into tears. He remembered the words of his dying mother, how she had warned him not to follow the example of bad boys. Then he kneeled down and confessed his sin to God. He asked God to forgive him and give him grace to do better. After this he went right back to the merchant and told him about his mother's counsel; how sorry he was that he had forgotten it; how he had asked God to forgive him and help him to do better, and how he had make up his mind to try to do so. "And now, sir," said the boy with tears in his eyes, "all I ask is that *you will just try me.*" He did try him, and never had cause to regret it.

When George took this course and resolved no longer to follow the bad example of his companions, he was "taking in the flying jib."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HOUSETOPS IN THE EAST.

HERE is a picture of the top of a house in Jerusalem. We read a great deal in the Bible about what people in that country were accustomed to do on the tops of their houses. We shall never understand these parts of the Bible unless we get a clear idea of the great difference between the tops of the houses in that country and in our own. We have so much rain and snow in this country that we usually make the roofs of our houses pretty steep, that the water which falls on them may run off as soon as possible. Flat roofs would not answer for our climate. But it is very different in the land where the Bible was written. The climate there is much drier than ours. The tops of their houses are all made flat. With the poorer people the roofs of their houses are made in this way: beams are laid across the top of the walls, about a foot and a half or two feet apart. On these a quantity of dried grass, or reeds, or brushwood is laid. Over this is a thick layer of

earth, and this is covered with a thick coat of clay, which is smoothed and pressed down, and then hardened by the heat of the sun. A stone roller is generally kept on the housetop, which is often drawn over it, so as to keep it well pressed down, and to close up any cracks that may be in it.

While we were staying in the village of Baalbek, in the northern part of Palestine, a slight fall of snow came, and we were greatly amused to see the villagers turn out on the tops of their houses with shovels, and brooms, to clear off the snow, and then draw the rollers over them to make them tight, so that the melting snow would not get through!

But the better class of houses are finished in a more solid and substantial manner. Some of these have their roofs covered thick with a kind of cement which turns solid, and becomes as hard as stone. Others are covered over with stone. This is the case with the one represented in our picture. You can see the square stones which make the top of this house. It has a stone wall too round the edge of it for safety. The woman that you see in the picture is watering some flower-pots that stand on the wall. The Jews were required, by law, to build such a wall round their housetops. We read in Deut. 22 : 8, "When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood

upon thine house, if any man fall from thence." And this law is still in force in that country wherever the people make use of these flat housetops. In the cities of Palestine these roofs are a great comfort. Most of the houses have no other place about them where the people can go to see the sun, or get fresh air, or dry their clothes, or set out their plants and flowers, or do many other things which are important to their health and comfort. And not only within the walls of the city, but even in the villages these flat housetops are very useful. There the farmer suns his wheat before sending it to the mill, and the flour when it comes back; and there he dries his figs and raisins, and other fruit, in safety both from animals and two-legged thieves.

During a large part of the year the housetop is the pleasantest part about the house, especially in the morning and evening. While we were staying at Beyrout I used to love to go to the housetop of our hotel, and sit there in the evening, to catch the breeze from the sea, and watch the sun go down, and enjoy the fine view of the snow-covered mountains of Lebanon in the distance. Multitudes of people in Syria sleep upon the housetops during the summer time. And we find this practice spoken of in the Bible.

In 1 Samuel 9 : 25, 26 we read about the way in which Samuel told Saul that God intended him

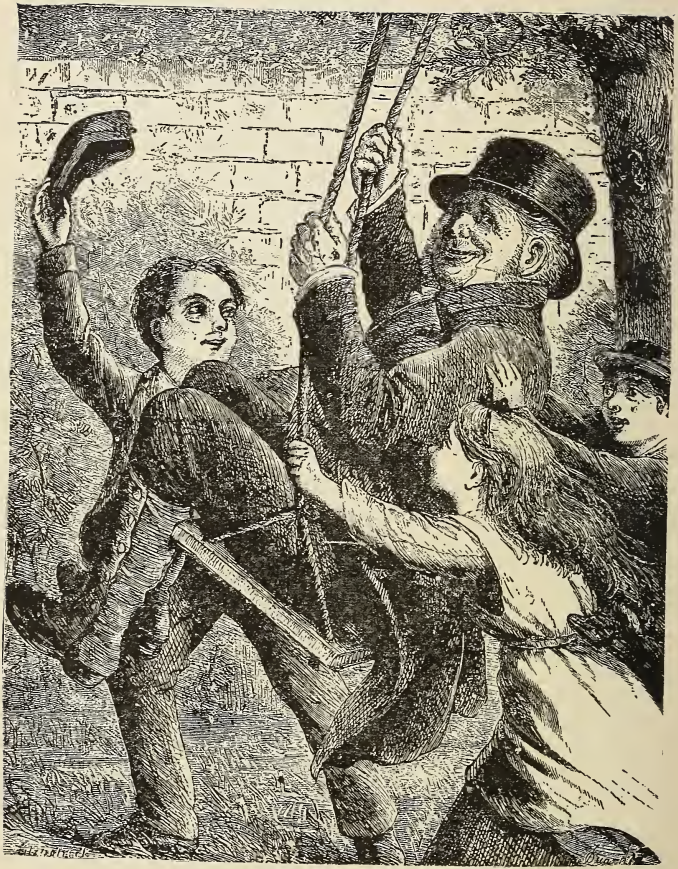
to be the King of Israel. Saul had set off to try and find some of his father's asses which were lost. He searched for them a long time but could not find them. Then he came to the prophet Samuel to inquire of him about them. He little thought that while seeking for these lost asses he was to find a kingdom. But it was so. And we read that Samuel took Saul up to the housetop, when he wanted to have a private talk with him, and to tell him all that God had said about his being made king. And then it seems that Samuel spread his bed for him there on the housetop.

I doubt whether Saul slept much that night, although he must have been pretty tired with his long journey. Very few men would sleep much, just after being told, for the first time, that a crown and a kingdom were soon to be theirs.

In our Saviour's time it was customary when anything important was to be made known to proclaim it from the housetop. He said to his disciples, "What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the housetops" (Matt. 10 : 27). And at the present day when the governor of a city or village has anything important to make known, it is done in this way. In the evening, when the people have returned from their labor in the field, the public crier will go up on the flat roof of one of the highest houses. Then he will call

upon the people to hear, and will publish the law, or proclaim the will of his master.

The housetops were used also as places of worship. The prophet speaks to those "that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops" (Zeph. 1 : 5). And in the 10th chapter of Acts we read of the apostle Peter, when he was in the city of Joppa, lodging "with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea side," that he "went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour," or twelve o'clock at noon. And there he had that wonderful vision, which was to take away his strong prejudice as a Jew, and prepare him to preach the gospel to the Gentiles.



CHAPTER XXXV.

SWINGING GRANDPA.

IT is an interesting sight which this picture presents to us. Here we see a venerable-looking grandfather having a real good time with his three grandchildren. If you look at the smiling, happy faces of the little ones, you feel sure they are having a good time with him.

We see in a moment that, though differing very much in their ages, the four people in this group understand each other very well, and have great enjoyment in being together. We like to see young people acting as the children in our picture are doing, that is, keeping company with the aged, and doing all they can to make them happy. We like it for three reasons. Each of these reasons begin with the letter P. And so we may call the subject of this picture *the swinging party and its three Ps.*

1. *A Pleasant Sight.*

If you go into an orange grove you will often find the little buds that are just opening, the flow-

ers that are in full bloom, and the golden, ripened fruit all hanging together on the same tree. It is a very pleasant thing to see the buds and the fruit so close together. And so it is a pleasant thing to see aged people and young people in each other's company.

Sometimes as people grow old they become cross and ill-tempered, and then it is no wonder the young do not care to be with them. But this grandfather in the swing is not one of that kind. Just look at his face, and see how kind and good-natured he looks! And when old people are not cross, children love to be with them. And then it is a pleasant thing for old people and young people to be together. I speak from experience here, for I am a grandfather with seven grandchildren. When my oldest grandson was three or four years old, he seemed to think that my chief business in life, the thing for which I was sent into the world, was to play "horsey" with him. And the first thing he would often say when he came to see me was, "Come, grandpa, and let's play horsey." And so I know I am speaking what is true when I say that the sight this picture represents is a pleasant sight.

2. *A Proper Sight.*

It is a very right and proper thing for the young to be respectful and reverent towards aged persons. In the nineteenth chapter of Leviticus and thirty-

second verse, we read these words, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honor the face of the old man, and fear thy God : I *am* the Lord." Here we see that God made a law on purpose to lead the young to show kindness, respect and reverence for aged persons. And when we are doing that which helps us on in the way of God's commandments, we may be very sure that we are doing a proper thing. And God not only gives us a command on this subject, but sets us an example in showing respect for the aged, when he is so kind as to say that "The hoary head *is* a crown of glory, *if* it be found in the way of righteousness" (Prov. 16 : 31).

And now for our third p. The sight which our picture represents is, 3. *A Profitable Sight.*

I mean by this that if we show respect to the aged and seek their company when we are young, we shall find it doing us good. The counsel or advice that aged persons can give us makes it profitable to be in their company. When we are young, we are like travelers going into a strange country. But our aged friends have been through that country. They can tell us what are the best roads to take, what are the best places at which to stop, and what are the dangers to be avoided.

But *God's promise* is another thing that makes it profitable to hold aged persons in reverence and respect. We have seen what God's *command* is on

this subject. And there is a *promise* connected with this and every other command of God. David tells us in Ps. 19 : 11, that in keeping his commandments there is great reward. And so we may take another look at the swinging party with their three ps, and say, "Well, no one can deny that this picture gives us a view of that which is *pleasant* and *proper* and *profitable.*"

CHAPTER XXXVI.

LESSONS IN NATURAL HISTORY.

IT seems as if this cradle had been set out of doors on a warm summer day, so that the little girl might have a nice sleep in the open air. She has had her sleep and has waked up from it, feeling comfortable and happy. As she is lying still in her cradle a mother hen comes walking by with her family of little chickens. She is standing near the cradle looking at her little ones, and no doubt feeling proud of them. As she stands there we may fancy we hear her saying, "Cluck, cluck, cluck." We cannot tell just what this means in chicken language. If we could understand it, we should perhaps find that this mother hen was saying, "Did you ever see such nice little chickens as mine are!"

The little girl in the cradle hears the clucking of the hen. She rises from her pillow and leans over the side of the cradle to see what it is that is making this noise. There she sees this mother hen with her little ones. This is just what our

picture sets before us. We should like to know what the girl thinks as she looks at those tiny little chickens. But we cannot find this out. Now, what lessons may this scene teach us? There are three lessons in natural history that we may very well learn from it.

1. *How weak and helpless babies are!*

This is true both of baby children and of baby chickens. The baby child is a great deal bigger than the baby chicken, but it is much more helpless. The baby child cannot walk for months after it is born, and has to be carried about in the arms of its mother or nurse. But the baby chicken can run about as soon as it comes out of its shell. The baby child has to be washed, and dressed, and fed, and cared for. The baby chicken needs no washing or dressing, and it can tell what is good for it to eat, and can help to feed itself from the very first. The baby child when it gets big enough has to go to school, and learn to read and write, and to do other things. But the baby chicken has no need to go to school. Here we see what a great difference there is between young children and young chickens. Baby children are much more helpless than baby chickens. And the reason why God has made this difference between them is, that chickens have no minds with which to think, and no souls with which to love, and so they need no education. But baby children have

minds and souls. They are to live forever, and they need to be educated. And God has made them as helpless as they are on purpose that their parents, and nurses, and teachers may have the opportunity of teaching them while they are young many things which it is very important for them to learn.

2. *What good protectors babies have.*

See, there is the mother hen standing by her little ones to take care of them. If a dog or a cat should come along and try to get at her babies, how bravely she would stand up and fight for them! And if she should see a hawk flying round and ready to pounce upon her little family, then in a moment, as our Saviour so beautifully said, we should see how the hen would gather her chickens under her wings for their safety and protection!

And now let us look away from the protector of the little chickens to the protector of the little child. That mother hen is a good protector for her helpless chickens, but think what a protector that little child has in her good mother. Think how she feeds her little one when it is hungry. Think how she carries it in her arms, how she works for it and watches over it. Think how gladly she gives her time, and strength, and thought, and money, and everything she has for the protection and comfort of her child. A loving, faith-

ful mother is one of the greatest blessings God can give to any child.

Who ran to help me when I fell,
And would some pretty story tell,
Or kiss the place to make it well?
My mother.

And can I ever cease to be
Affectionate and kind to thee,
Who was so very kind to me?
My mother.

3. *How much babies have to grow.*

Just look at one of those baby chickens, and then look at the big mother hen. Why she is a dozen or twenty times as big as any of them, and yet if they live, each of them will grow to be as big as she is.

And so when we see a baby child in its mother's arms, we may well think how much it has to grow. The baby's body will grow till it gets to be about as large as its mother's body, and then it will stop growing. But the baby's mind and soul will never stop growing. If we are loving and serving the blessed Saviour, we shall keep on growing wiser and better, not only while we live in this world, but after we get to heaven also. We shall be *equal to the angels there.* And what is better still than this, we shall be *like the glorious Saviour himself.*

CHAPTER XXXVII.

A PLEASANT SURPRISE.

THIS little girl in a grain field has taken her seat on the grass just outside the grain, to gather some of the wild flowers that are blooming in their beauty around her. While seated there she hears a rustle among the grain. On looking up, she sees a rabbit quite near her, with his long ears standing up. He is looking at her as if he would say, "Pray, who are you?" She is pleased to see him, and stretches out her hands towards him to let him know that she would be glad to have him come and play with her. We are not told whether bunny accepted her invitation or not. But, from what we know about wild rabbits, it is most likely that he did not accept it. He probably looked at her awhile, and then turned round and ran away. To see this rabbit must have been a pleasant surprise to this little girl.

No doubt we shall all meet with many surprises before another year comes to an end. Some of them may be pleasant, and some of them unpleas-

ant. It will depend a good deal upon ourselves what sort of surprises we may meet with, as we go on through the year. There are a good many pleasant surprises spoken of in the Bible. Let us look at some of these, and see if we can find out how to secure for ourselves pleasant surprises.

1. *Jacob had a pleasant surprise at Bethel.*

He had just started on a long journey. We read about it in the 28th chapter of Genesis. He was going from his father's home, Beer-sheba, in the southern part of Canaan, to make a visit to his uncle, Laban. Laban lived in Mesopotamia, the country from which Abraham came. Jacob was traveling alone, and on foot. Soon after starting he had to sleep out in the field all night, at a place called Bethel. There he had the famous vision of the ladder set up from earth to heaven, with the angels of God going up and down on it. And then God spoke to him, and gave him this sweet promise: "I *am* with thee, and will keep thee in all *places* whither thou goest, . . . for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of."

What a pleasant surprise this must have been to Jacob! And how it must have comforted his heart, during all the rest of his journey, to think of the sweet words that God had spoken to him!

2. And then we may very well remember that *Samuel had a pleasant surprise at Shiloh.*

That was where old Eli lived, and where the Jewish tabernacle was set up. Samuel's mother had taken him up there, and had given him to Eli the priest, to help him in doing the work that had to be done in connection with the worship of God in the tabernacle. The lamps had to be trimmed every day, and the courts of the tabernacle had to be swept and kept clean. I suppose that this was the kind of work that Samuel had to do. He could not have been more than seven or eight years old when his mother took him up there. We read about this interesting story in the third chapter of First Samuel.

It seems that Samuel slept in one of the rooms of the tabernacle, that he might always be at hand when he was wanted. After falling asleep one night he was startled by some one calling his name. It was then, as the hymn says, that

> "Little Samuel woke,
> And heard his Maker's voice."

At first he thought it was Eli who called him, and ran to see what was wanted. The call was repeated several times. Then Eli knew it was God who was calling Samuel. He told him to go back once more, and when the call came again to say, "Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth." He did so, and then for the first time in his life he heard God speaking to him. What a pleasant surprise

that must have been to Samuel! The message that he gave him to deliver to his old friend was a sad one indeed. There was nothing pleasant in that. But what God said to the lad was pleasant. Samuel did not know the Lord before. We may say he was converted on that night. Then he first began really to love God. After that he served him faithfully all his days. He would never forget that night. It was indeed a pleasant surprise to him. As we think of it, each of us may say:

"If God would speak to me,
And say he was my friend,
How happy I should be!
Oh how would I attend!
The smallest sin I then should fear,
If God Almighty were so near."

3. And then, *Zacchæus had a pleasant surprise in the sycamore tree.*

We read about this in Luke 19 : 1–10. Zacchæus had heard a great deal about Jesus, and had a great desire to see him. One day, Jesus was coming to Jericho, where Zacchæus lived, and he resolved to try and see him. But he was a little man, and in a great crowd would not be able to see much. The old proverb says, "Where there's a will there's a way," and so it was here. Zacchæus ran ahead of the crowd, and climbed up into a sycamore tree by the roadside. He expected nothing more than just to get one good look at this

wonderful man. The crowd is coming along. He waits patiently for it. Presently his eye rests on the *Great Teacher*. He watches him earnestly as he comes nearer. Now Jesus reaches the tree. He stops. He looks up. He speaks to the little man and says, "Zacchæus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house." What a pleasant surprise to Zacchæus that was! How quickly he came down! How eagerly he ran home! How gladly he received the blessed Saviour into his house!

Loving and serving Jesus will certainly bring to us many *a pleasant surprise.*

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

YOUNG SAILORS, AND WHAT THEY NEED.

HERE is a picture of two little boys who are playing sailors. They have a big tub full of water to represent the ocean. They have a little boat which they have rigged up to represent the ships that sail over the ocean; and they are trying to make their boat go. The full, rounded cheeks of the younger boy show that he is doing all he can to send the boat along, with the help of his own breath. The large boy has a pair of bellows in his hands, which he is using for the same purpose. These boys, in their play, may teach us a good lesson. We are all sailors, in one sense. Our life is like the ocean. We all have to sail over this ocean. And when we consider what kind of a wind sailors need to enable them to get well through with their voyage, we find that we need something of the same kind.

In the Bible the Holy Spirit is compared to the wind (John 3 : 8; Ezek. 37 : 9–13). And if we compare ourselves to sailors on the sea of life, we

shall find, in the help which the Spirit gives, just what sailors need in the kind of wind required to carry them safely to the end of their voyage.

1. Now, for one thing, *sailors need a fair wind.*

A *fair* wind is one that blows from behind the vessel. It will keep her sails all full, and send her straight on her way towards the port for which she is sailing. Sometimes sailors meet with head winds. Then they can make no progress. Sometimes they have side winds, which blow them out of their proper course. But what sailors desire above all things to have is a fair wind. Then they can get on nicely.

And if we have the help of the Holy Spirit, in trying to serve God, it will just be to us what a fair wind is to the sailor. This blessed Spirit can in all things direct and rule our hearts. This is the best kind of help that we can have. This will keep us from doing wrong, and lead us to do right. This will enable us, as the apostle says, to "grow in grace, and *in* the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour." If we have this help, we shall be like ships at sea with a fair wind, which is carrying them right on to the end of their voyage. One thing that sailors need is a *fair* wind.

2. But, in the next place, *sailors need a strong wind.*

Sometimes there are powerful currents in the

ocean, and when a ship meets with one of these a strong wind is needed, in order to resist that current and make headway against it. The temptations that we meet with in our daily lives are very much like the currents that sailors find in the ocean. Unless the sailor has a strong wind these currents will carry him out of his course. And unless we have the help we need, we shall be overcome by these temptations. There is Joseph in the house of Potiphar. When tempted to do "a great wickedness, and sin against God," he was like a ship at sea meeting a strong current. But he had the Spirit of God to help him. This enabled him to resist that temptation, and go right on against the current.

And if he had not done this he never would have become "the governor of all the land of Egypt." And what the Spirit did for Joseph he will do for you and me, and all of us. And we can sail on against every wrong current, if we only have the strong wind of the Spirit's help.

3. But then *sailors need a steady wind.*

I mean by this a wind that will keep blowing all the time. In some parts of the ocean there are what are called "*trade-winds.*" These keep on blowing day and night for weeks and months together. And sailors have a good time when they get into these trade winds. Then they just spread their sails, and away they go.

And if we compare the Holy Spirit to this wind, it is a steady wind like the trade-winds. He can be with us at all times, and in all places. He never gets tired of helping. He promises that he will "never leave us nor forsake us." And if it is true that this is the way in which he helps his people, then, when we compare the Spirit to the wind, we may well say that this is a *steady* wind. And if we are only careful to get the help of God's blessed Spirit in our efforts to serve him, then we shall have all that sailors need to make their voyage successful: we shall have a *fair* wind, a *strong* wind, and a *steady* wind.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE POWER OF KINDNESS.

A PICTURE like this of a girl and her pet pussy may teach us useful lessons. The lesson we may regard it as teaching us is, *The Power of Kindness.*

The best example of kindness that this world ever saw was seen in Jesus our blessed Saviour. It was the kindness of his heart that brought him down from heaven, "to seek and to save the lost." And "when Jesus was seen among men," it was this kindness in his heart which led him to "go about doing good." This led him to heal the sick, to open the eyes of the blind, to make the deaf hear, and the lame walk, and the dumb speak; to cast out devils, and to raise the dead. And when we become his servants, one of his commandments to us is, "Be ye kind one to another" (Eph. 4: 32). And, if we learn the lesson of kindness which Jesus teaches us, we shall see the power which it exercises in *three* ways.

1. The first way in which kindness will show its power, will be *in making us look well.*

Just take a peep at the little girl in our picture. Certainly she looks well. I mean by this that she has a very pretty or beautiful appearance. See what a pleasant smile is on her lips! See how sweet and cheerful her whole face looks! See how tenderly her eyes are looking down on pussy. When you meet a person with a face like this, you can tell in a moment that that person has a kind heart. Pussy knows that the little girl who is holding her in her arms has a kind heart. And there is nothing like this to make the face look well.

Some people try to make their faces look pretty by using paint and ornaments outside. But the best way to make our faces look beautiful, is to paint them from the inside. I mean by this that when we have kind, and gentle, and loving feelings in our hearts, our faces will show it and will make them look more pleasing than anything else can do.

The Handsome Soul.—A little boy was coasting down hill one winter's day. In gliding over the pavement he ran against a lady who was passing by, and tore her dress. Feeling ashamed and sorry for what he had done, he jumped up and made an apology.

"Never mind, my little man," said the lady, "I know you didn't mean to do it. There is not much harm done. A few stitches will repair it." So she smiled at him and went on her way.

The boy looked after her with surprise, and exclaimed, "Oh! isn't she a beauty?"

"If you call her a beauty, you sha'n't choose a wife for me," said one of his companions; "why her face looks old and wrinkled."

"Well, she's got a handsome soul, anyhow," said the boy. And he was right. It was the power of kindness in that good lady's heart that made her face look so well.

2. And then, in the second place, the power of kindness is seen *in making us feel well.*

The true secret of being happy ourselves, is to try and make others happy. No one ever had such happiness in himself as Jesus our Saviour has. When he endured the shame and suffering of the cross, we are told that he did it "for the joy that was set before him" (Heb. 12 : 2). This means the joy he would feel in showing kindness to poor sinners in saving their souls from death. And he prayed that his people might have his joy fulfilled in themselves. This means that they should be made happy by showing kindness to others, and by trying to do them good. The kindest persons are always the most happy. And if we really try to be kind to all about us, and to be doing them good, we shall find that *this* is the best way to make us happy. And through our happiness we shall learn that kindness has the power to make us *feel* well.

3. And then the *third* way in which kindness will show its power, is *in making us do well.*

We see this illustrated in our picture. There is kindness in the heart of this little girl, and it is this which leads her to treat her pussy so gently, and try to make her feel comfortable and happy. A good minister in England used to say, that "he would not give much for any man's religion unless his cat and dog were the better for it."

When we become true Christians our hearts will be filled with love to God. This will lead us to love all God's creatures, and to be kind to them. This idea is beautifully expressed in the book of Job, when he says of the person who is filled with this love, "Thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field: and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee" (Job. 5:23). And so we see how true it is that kindness shows its power in making us *look* well, *feel* well, and *do* well.

CHAPTER XL.

THANKSGIVING FOR DAILY FOOD.

THESE two children have come home late from school. They are having their dinner by themselves, and their mother, as she waits upon them, is having a nice little talk with them about "Thanksgiving for Daily Food."

I cannot tell just what this good mother said to her children on this subject, but it is easy enough to think of *four* good reasons why we should thank God for the food we eat every day.

1. One reason why we ought to give thanks to God for our food, before we eat it, is *because God gives it to us.*

Suppose that God should send an angel down from heaven to bring us our food every day, then we should all admit that God gave us our daily bread. Or suppose that, instead of an angel, God should send ravens to bring us "bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening," as they did to Elijah at the brook Cherith, why then we should admit too that it was God who

gave us our daily food. Or suppose that God should send our food to us every night as he sent the manna to the Israelites, by miracle, then we should be obliged to admit that God gave us this food.

But it is not in any of these ways that God sends us food. He sends the rain, and the dew, and the sunshine. These make the grass, and the grain, and the fruits grow from which we get our food. And then he gives our parents health and strength to work and get money to buy for us the food we need. And when we think of this we know that it is just as true that God gives us our daily food, as if it came to us by an angel, or by ravens, or by miracle.

And if God gives us all the food we have, this is a good reason why we should thank him for it.

2. Another reason why we should thank God for our food is *because the Bible teaches us to do so.*

In one place we are told, "In every thing give thanks" (1 Thess. 5 : 18). But we cannot obey this command of God unless we thank him for our daily food. And then there is another place in which the Bible teaches us to do this particular thing. In 1 Cor. 10 : 31, the Apostle Paul says, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." We eat and drink to the glory of God when we thank him for giving us what we have to eat and drink. But if

we eat or drink without thanking him, we cannot do it to the glory of God. It is a good reason therefore why we should thank God for our daily food, to know that the Bible teaches us to do so.

3. But a third reason why we should do this is *because Jesus did so.*

What a beautiful illustration we have of this in Matt. 14:19! Here we read: "And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to *his* disciples, and the disciples to the multitude." And there are nine or ten places mentioned in the Gospel, where Jesus did the same thing. This shows us that it was his habit or custom. He always gave thanks to his Father in heaven for his daily food before he ate of it. And one of the things that Jesus came on earth to do, was to teach us how to live. He set us an example, and our duty is to tread in the blessed steps of his most holy life. To be a Christian is to be like Jesus. It is to follow his example; to have the same mind that was also in Christ Jesus. It is an excellent reason why we should thank God for our daily food, to say that *Jesus did so.*

4. And then the fourth reason why we should thank God for our daily food is *because it is right.*

Why, if we ask a person to give us a pin, and

the pin is given, we ought to say "Thank you," politely, and every right feeling should lead us to do this. We are taught to ask God every day to "give us this day our daily bread," and when God gives us that bread, surely it is right and proper that we should thank him for it! I saw a story the other day which comes in very nicely here, to show how right it is to thank God for our food.

An elderly person who lived in the country went to a wedding of a friend in the city. At the dinner, after the wedding, he sat by some gay young men. Before beginning to eat, he paused a moment or two, to offer up his silent thanksgiving to God for the food he was about to eat. One of the young men saw it, and thought he would have some fun over the old gentleman. So he said, "Well, my old friend, I suppose all the people in your house say prayers over their food."

The good farmer looked at him for a moment, and then quietly said, "No, sir, we have some *calves* in our barn: I feed them every day; but I never hear *them* say any prayers over their food!" This turned the laugh on the young man, who had nothing more to say. It served him right. But let us always remember these four good reasons why we should thank God for our daily food. We ought to do it because *God gives us our food*, because *the Bible teaches us to do it*, because *Jesus did it*, and because *it is right*.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE UNEXPECTED DANGER.

HERE is a picture of a little boy who is meeting with a danger which he little expected. His mother sent him to the spring-house to get a pitcher of milk. He went. He filled the pitcher with milk and was on his way back, when he met with an unexpected danger.

Two dogs came up to him, showing by their looks that they would like to have a little of the milk in his pitcher. One of them jumped up to him and looked him earnestly in the face, as if he would say, "Give me some of that?" The little fellow was frightened, and leaned against the fence. In holding the pitcher up to keep it away from the dog, some of the milk was spilled, and it would no doubt all have been lost if it had not been for a friend of the boy, who saw what was going on. He came up and drove the dogs away; and so the little fellow escaped from the danger which threatened him, and was able to carry the milk safely to his mother

TO THE
DAIRY

We may use this little incident for two things; one is *to teach a lesson*, the other is *to start a question*.

1. The lesson thus taught is this, that *there is danger everywhere.*

This little boy did not expect any danger as he carried the pitcher of milk from the spring-house to his mother. But he found it there. And so it is with us. When we go from home to school, or on an errand, we never can tell what may happen to us before we return. But it is not only when we are away from home that danger may meet us. We may reach home safely and find danger even there.

I remember hearing of a gentleman who had been a great traveler. He got through his long journeys, and returned home without meeting with any accident. But the day after his return, in going rapidly along one of the walks in his own garden, he stumbled over a pebble-stone and fell, and broke his leg.

I have read of another who had been all round the world. He had met with storms at sea, with earthquakes, and pestilences on land, and yet had passed safely through them all. But, while eating his first meal after returning home, something went wrong in his throat and choked him. This led some one to write these two lines, which we see are true ·

"The earthquake may be made to spare
The man who's strangled by a hair."

And so let us never forget this lesson, *there is danger everywhere.*

But there is another thing for which we may use the incident illustrated in our picture.

2. This is *to start a question.* The question thus started is this, *How may we best meet this danger?*

The answer is a very simple one, it is by *asking God our Saviour to take care of us.* And there are two reasons why we are safe from danger if Jesus takes care of us. One reason is, that *he knows all about the danger before it comes.* If we are walking down the street, we cannot tell whom we shall meet as we turn round the next corner. But Jesus knows.

You remember how it was on the night in which he was betrayed. When he sent two of his disciples to find a room in which they might eat the passover, he told them that as they entered the city they would meet a man "bearing a pitcher of water," and that he would show them such a room as they needed. This shows us how well Jesus knows everything, even before it happens. And so, though we may know nothing of the danger that is before us, yet Jesus knows all about it. And this is a good reason why we should pray to him every morning, and ask him to take care of us all through the day.

And then there is another reason why we should do this. Jesus not only knows about the danger, but *he is always able to save us from it.* To know about a danger will do us little good, unless we can find out some way to escape it. If you and I were at sea, and we knew that the ship, in which we were sailing, would sink in an hour or two, that would do us no good unless there was a life-boat at hand, which we could make ready to get into before the ship went down. But in every danger Jesus is able to help and deliver us. The Bible tells us that he is "able to save unto the uttermost."

Then let us remember that though *there is danger everywhere*, yet if we ask Jesus to take care of us we shall always be safe, because he *knows* of the danger *before* it comes, and he can *save* us *when* it comes.

CHAPTER XLII.

WILLIAM PENN.

THE two hundredth anniversary of William Penn's coming to America and founding the State of Pennsylvania and the city of Philadelphia was celebrated during the year 1882. And so, as we look at the picture before us, we may imagine ourselves to be making a pilgrimage to the grave in which the remains of this great and good man are resting. One who has visited the spot thus speaks of it: "The grave is in the grassy plot which surrounds the little meeting-house near Beaconsfield, in Buckinghamshire. The Friends are not in the habit of putting head-stones over the graves in which their loved ones are buried. For a long time the grave of Penn had no stone to mark it; but so many strangers came to visit it that some years ago those who had it in charge agreed to put up head-stones to the graves of the Penn family." The second grave on the left-hand side of our picture has the name of William Penn on it. There is only a little mound,

about the height of a common grave, with the plain head-stone which bears his honored name.

This is all that marks the spot where the remains of this good man are resting.

William Penn was *a man of peace.* He tried

to promote peace wherever he went. And there were *three* ways in which he did this; and we may all imitate his example in these things.

1. One way in which he promoted peace was by having *peaceful feelings.*

He tried to overcome all anger and malice, and to have "the same mind that was in Christ Jesus." And we must try to do the same if we wish to be followers of "the Prince of peace." Here is an illustration of what I mean.

A little boy came to his mother one morning with a broken toy, and begged her to mend it. It was a beautiful new toy, and the little fellow's heart was set on it. His lips quivered and his eyes were full of tears as he placed the broken toy in his mother's hands. "I'll try to mend it, darling," said his mother, "but I'm afraid I can't do it." He watched her anxiously for awhile, and then, wiping away the tears with the back of his hand, said cheerfully, "Never mind, mamma. If you can't do it, I'll be just as happy without it."

This was beautiful. That little fellow had peaceful feelings indeed.

2. And then the second way in which William Penn showed that he was a man of peace was by using *peaceful words.*

Like his blessed Master, "when he was reviled he reviled not again." Kind, gentle, loving words

were always on his lips. And if we try to follow his example in this respect, we shall be able wherever we are to promote "peace on earth" and make those about us happy. The following incident shows us how this may be done.

One day, in suddenly turning the corner of a crowded street in the city, a young lady ran with force against a little ragged beggar boy and almost knocked him down. Stopping as soon she could, she turned and said very kindly to the boy, "I beg your pardon, my little fellow. I'm very sorry that I ran against you." The poor boy was astonished. He looked at her for a moment with surprise, and then, taking off his torn cap, he made a low bow, and said, while a bright smile spread itself all over his face, "You can hev my parding, Miss, and welcome. And the next time you may run agin me and knock me clean down, and I won't say a word." After the lady has passed on he turned to his companion and said, "I say, Jim, it's the first time I ever had any one ask my parding, and it kind o' took me off my feet."

How happy that poor boy was made by the gentle, peaceful words of that kind lady! He never would forget them as long as he lived.

3. And then there was one other way in which William Penn showed himself to be a man of peace, and that was by his *peaceful actions.*

We see this beautifully illustrated in the cele-

brated treaty which he made with the Indians under the famous elm tree that used to stand in Kensington, Philadelphia. Instead of fighting the Indians and taking their land from them by violence, he bought it of them in a way that was perfectly satisfactory to them, and which made them his warm friends as long as they lived. And the best way for us to show our respect for this good man is in trying to follow his example, by performing peaceful actions as he did. Here are two nice illustrations of what I mean. One may be called *The Secret of Happiness.*

"Mother," said little Minnie, one day, "I've learned how to be happy, very happy."

"Have you, my dear? Well, tell me the secret."

"Why, it's by forgetting myself, and always trying to make those about me happy."

This is a secret worth knowing. The other story may be called *Playing Like a Christian.*

There were two little children, a boy and a girl, who were cousins. They lived near each other, and often played together. They both went to the same church and Sabbath-school. They learned to love the blessed Saviour, and became Christians about the same time.

One day the little boy came to his mother, and said, "Mother, I'm sure that Cousin Emma is a Christian."

"And what makes you feel so sure about it?"

"Why, because she plays like a Christian."

"Plays like a Christian! What do you mean by that?" asked his mother.

"Why, you see," said the little fellow, "she used to be very selfish. If she didn't have her own way in everything, she would get cross, and say, 'I won't play with you; you are an ugly little boy.' But now it's very different. Why, if you take away everything she's got, she never gets angry; and so I'm sure she is a Christian."

We may all learn a lesson from this little girl. Her peaceful actions are worthy of imitation.

And so let us try to follow the example of William Penn, the man of peace—by seeking to have *peaceful feelings*, by speaking *peaceful words*, and by doing *peaceful actions*.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS IN HARD TIMES.

THIS picture may well represent Christmas to us. It is the picture of a little girl. We see also the green, glossy leaves of the beautiful holly bush. The holly leaves always make us think of Christmas.

And then if we look at this little girl herself, she makes us think of Christmas. Take a peep at her. Does she not look as if she had just come away from the Christmas tree? It seems as if she were looking at that tree and wondering about it. She has heard about Jonah's gourd that grew up, as it were, in a night, and she may perhaps be thinking that this Christmas tree must belong to the same vegetable family. At any rate, she thinks it certainly has the same power of coming up very rapidly. For like that famous gourd, this tree came up in a night. When she went to bed on the night before Christmas, she was very sure there was no such tree in any corner of the nursery. But when she got up early on Christmas morning,

there it was—a full grown tree. Its trunk and its branches and its leaves are all perfect. It has a wonderful variety of *blossoms and flowers,* such as are never found on any other tree than this wonderful Christmas tree.

And then when you come to look at its *fruit,* it is more wonderful still. We read in the New Testament about a wonderful tree called "the tree of life," that the apostle John saw growing in the New Jerusalem. It was on the banks of the river that runs through that glorious, golden city. We have an account of this tree in Revelation 22 : 2. We are told that it bore "twelve *manner of* fruits." But in regard to the number of different fruits that it bears, this Christmas tree exceeds even the tree of life. I have known Christmas trees that bore *fifteen* or *twenty* different kinds of fruit. Yes, and even more than that.

Let us take another look at this little girl now, and see how many kinds of fruit she has gathered from the Christmas tree. There in her left arm she holds a very good specimen of the doll-fruit. On her right arm she has a sample of the grace-hoop-fruit. Back of this, close into her bosom, she had a nice specimen of the ball-fruit. And then, what is that square thing under the grace-hoops? At first I thought it must be a drawing slate. But it is too thick for a slate. I think it must be a box of blocks. Well, then, if this is so,

we have here a nice specimen of the box-fruit. And here we have one, two, three, four different kinds of fruit from the Christmas tree that this little girl has. Certainly she has enough, by God's blessing, to make for her "*a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.*"

But these are "*hard times*" that we are living in. Some Christmas trees may not bear as much fruit this year as they have borne in other years. Well, suppose this is so; here are three ways of having "a happy Christmas" even is these "hard times."

One way is *by being thankful for what we have.* Those of us who have the least of earthly good things, still have more than we deserve. And so we may well be thankful for what we have. This will be one way of making for us "a happy Christmas."

A second way of doing this is *by trying to make some one else happy.* If we have only a crust of bread to eat, yet if we share that crust with another who has none, what is left will taste sweeter and will do us more good than if we were to eat it all ourselves. This is what Solomon means when he says, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth." *Giving* is God's rule for *getting. Doing good is the best way of getting good.*

And then the third way is *to seek more of God's blessing.* Solomon says, "The blessing of the LORD,

it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it." He means to say that this blessing will do for us what gold and silver cannot do; it will make us happy. A person who was very rich was happy with his riches. Afterwards he became very poor, but still seemed as happy as when he was rich. Some one asked him to explain how this was. This was his answer: "When I was rich I *enjoyed God in all things*, and that made me happy. But now, when I am poor, I *enjoy all things in God*, and this makes me happy too."

CHAPTER XLIV.

SUMMER NOON.

IT is an interesting view of "summer noon" which this picture gives us. Here we see a number of cows. They have found their way into the cool water of a running stream, and are having a good time, as the noontide hour, with its oppressive heat, passes slowly away.

And there are three things which these cows need for their comfort as they stand waiting in patience there. They need shade from the scorching beams of the sun, and they find it in the great tree which spreads its sheltering branches over them. They are thirsty, and need water to quench their thirst; they are oppressed by the heat, and need water to cool their suffering limbs; but they find both of these wants supplied by the cooling stream in whose gently-flowing waters they are standing. Now take a good look at this picture, and see what a beautiful illustration it affords of the kind way in which God provides for the wants of all his creatures.

And so we may take this picture as illustrating for us the sweet promise that we find in the 19th verse of the 4th chapter of the Epistle to the Philippians. Here we read these precious words: "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." The promise of such supply for everything we can need is very comforting. Let us look for a few moments at three things about this supply.

1. The first thing to notice about it is its CERTAINTY: "My God SHALL supply," etc. The assurance of this supply rests on the promise of God, and that is just the most certain of all things. How beautifully Jesus spoke of the certainty which marks his promises when he said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away" (Luke 21 : 33). And so, because God has promised this supply, we may be sure that it is certain. Here are two nice illustrations of the effect which a simple belief in the certainty of this supply should have upon us.

(1) The first of these may be headed, "*He Says He Will.*"

A little boy, about twelve years old, had lost his mother. She had been a good Christian woman, and had taught him faithfully to trust in God and feel sure that he would take care of him. He was employed to sweep the crossing of one of the crowded streets in the city where he lived. Here

he did his work faithfully and with a bright and cheerful spirit.

One day a person who knew something of his history stopped in passing by to have a little talk with him.

"Well, Charley," said he, "how do you expect to get along now you have got no mother?"

"Well, mother told me to be honest and industrious and to trust in God to take care of me, and that's just what I am trying to do."

"Oh! but, Charley," said his friend, "you know that God is in heaven, and he has so many things to attend to. How can you expect him to take care of you?"

"Well," said Charley, "I only know that *he says he will*, and that's enough for me."

That little boy felt sure that the supply he was looking for was a *certain* supply.

(2) "*Dem Supposes.*"

This story is about a poor colored woman, whose name was Nancy. She supported herself by washing, and was very poor; but still she was always cheerful and happy.

One day a Christian man, who had never learned to have proper trust in God, and was always worrying about the future, stopped to talk with her.

"Ah, Nancy," said he, "how can you sing away and always be so happy. I should think that

when you looked forward to the future it would take away all your happiness. Suppose, for instance, that you should be sick and not able to

work. What would become of you? Or suppose that your present employers should move away, and no one else would give you any work to do; or suppose—"

"Please stop dar!" cried Nancy. "Massa, I neber supposes. De Lord is my Shepherd, and I *knows* I shall not want. And, honey," she added to her gloomy friend, "it's jus' *dem supposes* as is making you so mis'ble. You orter to gib dem all up, and jus' trus' in de Lord."

This is true. And that poor woman found comfort in thinking of the *certainty* of the supply which God promises to his children.

2. In the next place this promised supply is ABUNDANT as well as certain. The apostle says, "My God shall supply all your need." God does not promise to give us all that we may desire to have. We may wish for many things which he knows it would not be well for us to have. These he will not give us. David says, "No good *thing* will he withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Ps. 84:11). But the "good thing" here spoken of means only that which God knows will be useful to us and will be likely to do us good at our latter end. And when we find that *all our need* is supplied we may well rejoice and be glad. Here is a good illustration of this point of our subject. We may call it "*The Happiest Man You Ever Saw.*"

One day, during the late war, as the chaplain of a hospital was walking through the wards, a wounded soldier said to him, "Are you the chaplain of this hospital, sir?"

"I am, sir, and I shall be glad to serve you."

"Oh, I'm so glad we have a chaplain here! I'm the happiest man you ever saw," said the soldier, and his face was all lighted up with joy.

"How can that be," said the chaplain, "when you have lost your leg, and—"

"No matter about my leg," was his reply. "I shall have them both in heaven. I tell you I'm the happiest man you ever saw." And his heart seemed to leap with gladness.

"Well, what makes you happy," asked the chaplain.

"I will tell you," he said. "As we were going into battle I said to myself, 'This is serious work.' So I prayed God to spare my life and pardon my sins, or, if I should be killed to take me to heaven. Presently a shell struck my leg below the knee, and I just lay still and prayed. I was left on the battle-field all night, but I lay still and prayed. Oh, chaplain, that was the happiest night of my life!" And again his face lighted up with joy.

"But how could you be happy under such circumstances?" asked the chaplain.

"Oh, I just prayed, and Christ seemed to come and stand by my side all night to comfort me! I felt sure that my sins were all pardoned and that I was going straight to heaven. It's twelve days since the battle took place, but still *I'm the happiest man you ever saw.*"

Now surely all that man's need was supplied. He felt that the supply was *abundant.* It left him nothing else to ask for.

3. And then the supply which God promises is not only a certain supply and an abundant supply, but it is also a KIND supply. We see this when we think of the channel through which this supply comes. It is by Christ Jesus. This supply is left in his hands to give it to his people. It could not be in better hands. He is so loving and gentle and kind. We may feel perfectly sure that what he gives will be kindly given. The words he spoke when on earth were words of kindness. The works he performed were works of kindness. And when our need is all supplied by Christ Jesus we may be sure it will be *kindly* supplied.

Now let us take another look at our picture: and when we see how well our Father in heaven has supplied the need of those cattle we may feel satisfied that he will supply our need; and when we think of the supply which he promises we may well speak of it as a *certain* supply, an *abundant* supply, and a *kind* supply.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE EMIGRANT'S FAREWELL.

THIS picture represents a man and his two daughters leaving old Scotland, where they had lived all their days, to seek a home in this our western land. In the distance we see the ship, lying at anchor, in which they are to make their voyage. We see them in a boat, which is carrying them to the ship. They are looking over the stern of the boat, and gazing sadly and sorrowfully at their dear native land, which they are now leaving, never expecting to see it again. This is a very trying experience to pass through. Many persons who have gone through it remember well the pain with which it wrung their hearts and the tears with which it filled their eyes. This is a farewell, however, which most of our readers have never had occasion to understand. They have never left the land of their birth to go to a new country.

But yet we all have some occasions on which we are called upon to say the word farewell. We say it to our friends when we have to separate from

them. This year will soon pass away, and we shall all have to say farewell to it; and when we reach the point when we have to say this to the old year, how should we feel? I wish to speak of *two* feelings that we should have in saying farewell to an old year.

1. For one thing we should have *a feeling of penitence* in our hearts as we say farewell to the passing year.

The close of the year is always a time when good, honest business people try to find out how much they owe to others, and to see if they can settle their accounts. This is right and proper. And if it is right to act thus towards our fellow-creatures, surely it is still more proper to act thus towards our God. We are all in debt to him. Every bad word we have spoken, every sinful act we have done, every wrong thought or feeling or desire we have had through all this year, is written down in God's book as a debt that we owe to him. What a long account against us there must be in that book! Surely when we think of our debt to God it should make us feel sorrowful. It should give us the feeling of penitence. And certainly the close of the year is a good time to attend to this matter. We should try to get our account with God squared up and our debts to him all paid before the year closes.

But how is this to be done? Like the man in

the parable, we have nothing to pay, though we owe so much. Then what shall we do? Who can pay our debts for us? Jesus is the only one who can do this. If we come to him in prayer, if we tell him we are really sorry for our sins of the past year, and ask him to forgive them, he will do it. He will settle our accounts with God for us. Everything written against us in God's book he will blot out. Then we shall go out of the old year with our sins all pardoned and our souls at peace with God; and this will give us real pleasure as we say to the closing year farewell.

2. But then, in saying this to the old year, *we should have in our hearts* THE FEELING OF GRATITUDE TO GOD *for all his mercies*, as well as penitence for our sins.

David says that God's mercies are new every morning. Did you ever try to count up God's mercies to you for a year? Let me give you a boy's experience in this matter. The story may be called "*A Year's Mercies.*"

A little fellow, who was very clever at figures, had heard so much about the goodness of God that he thought he would try to reckon up how many mercies he received in a year. So he took his slate and pencil and began to set them down. "Let me see," said he, "there are 365 days in a year, so I must put down 365 mercies; but then I get more than one mercy a day. Why, every hour brings

some mercy; so I must multiply the 365 days by 24, the number of hours in a day. This makes 8760 mercies for the year. But then God's mer-

cies come oftener than once an hour. Why, every minute brings a mercy; and if I multiply God's hourly mercies by 60, the number of minutes in

an hour, it makes my mercies for the year more than half a million. What a great number this is! But let me count my greater mercies," said the little fellow. "There are my dear father and mother, who have been spared to me all these years. Two big marks for them. Then one for health preserved, another for food, another for clothing, and then for teachers, books, pleasant companions and merry play, more still; and then there's the Bible—a big, broad mark for that; and then the Sabbaths, fifty-two for the year. But oh, dear me! my slate is full, and yet I don't seem to be half through with counting my mercies; but I must stop."

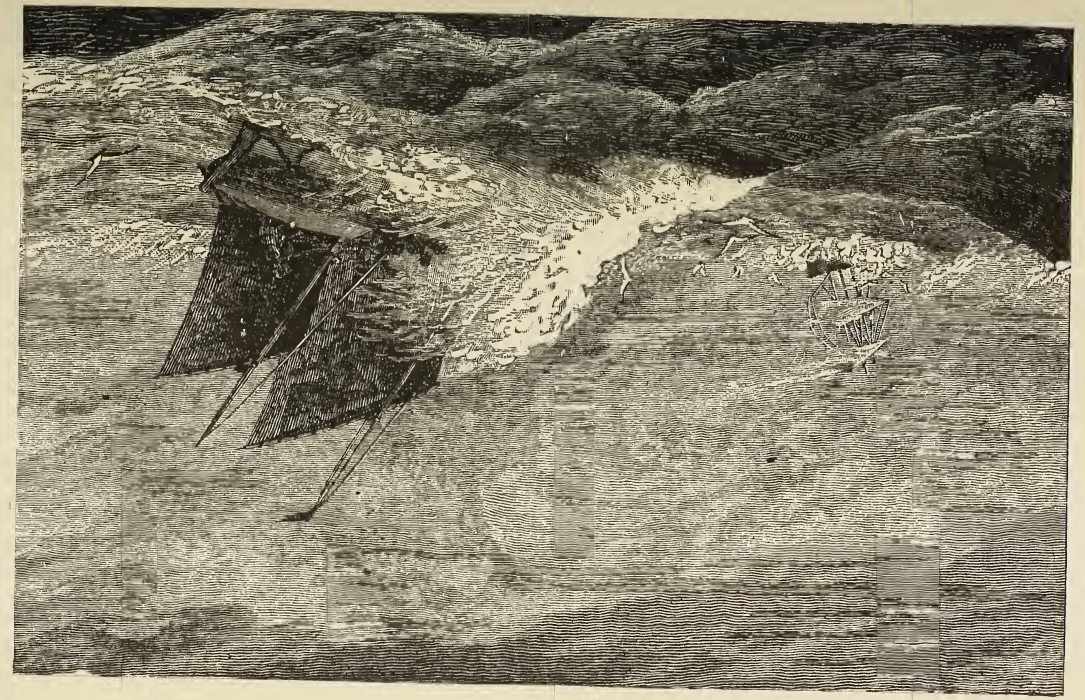
Now if we only have these two feelings in our hearts at the close of a year—*penitence for our sins* and *gratitude for God's mercies*—we may be sure that the year on which we are soon to enter will be to us "a happy new year."

CHAPTER XLVI.

A NEW YEAR'S GREETING.—THE LIFE-BOAT.

THIS beautiful picture presents a vessel that has been wrecked at sea and driven on a sand-bank. The crew have no means of escape, and a life-boat from the nearest life-saving station on the coast is on its way to try and rescue the poor sailors. That is the last voyage which this unfortunate ship will ever make.

We have just entered on a new year. As we do this we may well feel as if we were taking a fresh start on the voyage of life. And a most important question for us to ask ourselves, as we stand on the threshold of this new year, is this, What can we do to make this voyage before us a happy and prosperous one? Many things might be spoken of as desirable here: but, confining ourselves to the imagery of our picture, we may say that one of the most important things for us is to have a good life-boat on board our vessel. The voyage before us is the voyage of life. The vessel in which each of us is sailing is his own soul.



And we can take Jesus on board as our life-boat. He can come into our souls just as the life-boat is taken on board a vessel. And we may well speak of Jesus as the best life-boat, because of three things which he can do for us that no other life-boat can ever do for those in the vessel on board of which it is taken.

1. *In the first place Jesus is the best life-boat because of the protection he can give to those with whom he sails.* When an ordinary life-boat is taken on board a vessel, all the use which the sailors expect to make of it is to get into it and be saved if their vessel should spring a leak at sea and be in danger of sinking. No protection from other dangers of any kind is expected from the life-boat. But if we take Jesus as our life-boat, he can watch over us by night and by day. He can keep us in the hollow of his hand, or as the apple of his eye; and we shall be perfectly safe in his care. Daniel had taken God as his life-boat before he was cast into the lions' den, and this gave him protection there. The Lord in whom he trusted sent his angel to shut the lions' mouths, and they could not hurt him. Daniel had this best life-boat, and we see how it protected him from all danger. And it was the same with his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego. The king of Babylon threatened to throw them into the burning fiery furnace if they would not bow down and wor-

ship the golden image which he had set up. They refused to worship his image. Then he ordered them to be bound hand and foot, and to be cast into the fiery furnace. He expected they would be burnt alive at once. But it was not so. The fire just burned the cords by which they were bound; then they arose and walked up and down amidst the flames of the furnace. The God in whom they trusted, and whom they had taken as their life-boat, appeared to them in the form of a man, and walked about the furnace with them. No doubt that was the pleasantest walk those three men ever took. And when they came out from the furnace it was found that not a hair of their heads was singed. That was protection indeed! And Jesus is just as able to protect his people now as he was then, and we may well say he is the best life-boat because of the protection he can give his people.

2. *But Jesus is the best life-boat again because of the help he gives his people.* The sailor on board a vessel never thinks of looking to the life-boat for any help in the daily duties he has to perform. But if we take Jesus for our life-boat, then, whenever we have anything hard to do, we can always get just the help we need from him. His precious promise to each of his people is, "I will help thee" (Isa. 41 : 10). How do you suppose Noah could ever have built the ark if God had not

helped him? He was not a ship-builder. He did not live in a seaport town. There were no ship-carpenters living near him. So large a vessel had never been built before. And yet, when God told him to build the ark, he went right to work and never stopped till it was done.

How could Moses ever have brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, and have led them through the Red Sea and the howling wilderness, without the help of God? But he had taken him as his life-boat, and he found in him all the help he needed.

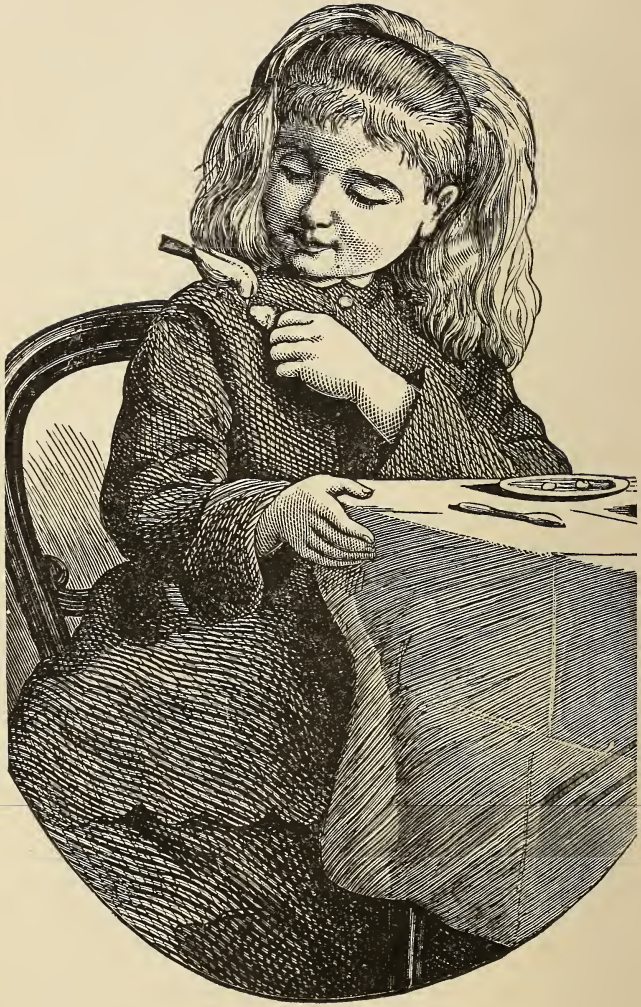
How could David, with no other weapon than his sling and stone, ever have conquered that great Philistine giant, covered all over as he was with armor, unless God had helped him? And if we take Jesus as our life-boat, we shall always find the help we need in him.

3. *But Jesus is the best life-boat again because of the blessings he bestows on his people.* The ordinary life-boat has nothing to give to any one on board the vessel; but Jesus is able to give us every blessing that we can need. Yes, and he has promised to do so, too. When we begin to love and serve him, or take him as our life-boat, he says to each of us, "From this day will I bless *you*" (Hag. 2 : 19).

The Greeks used to tell a story of a certain king named Midas. The story says that the idol

gods he worshipped were so pleased with him for something he had done that they promised to give him anything he should ask. He asked to have the power of turning everything he touched to gold. They gave it to him, as the story says. He took hold of the staff he used to walk with, and instantly it turned to gold. He sat down on a rock and laid his hand upon it; in a moment it was a mass of gold. He went home thinking he was the happiest man alive. But his happiness did not last long. On reaching home he felt hungry, and called for something to eat. He took hold of a piece of bread, but it turned at once to gold. He took a cup of water to drink, but before he could raise it to his lips it turned to liquid gold. Then he was greatly distressed. Gold was very good for some things, but for eating and drinking it was not so good. The story says he asked the gods to take their gift back again, but they refused to do it, and he died of hunger.

But Jesus has a better gift than this to bestow upon his people. He makes everything about them turn not to gold, but to *good*. He promises to withhold no *good* thing from them, and to "make all things work together for good" to them. This is the greatest privilege we can have.



CHAPTER XLVII.

A NEW YEAR'S LESSON.—KINDNESS TO ANIMALS.

THE beginning of a new year is a good time for settling accounts, and for taking fresh starts. This is the time when business people take an account of the goods they have in their stores, and lay out new plans for the year before them.

There is one branch of business that all our readers have something to do with, and that is the business of getting on in the world; or of trying to *be* good themselves, and to *do* good to others. Here we have a picture of a girl feeding a tiny little bird which has perched upon her shoulder. The bird seems quite at home with her; and how pleased she looks to have it share her meal! And this picture may very well suggest one good rule for us to adopt, as we begin the new year; it is the rule of *kindness to animals.*

Many reasons might be given why we should all act on the rule of showing kindness to animals; but we have only room now to speak of two.

1. The first reason why we ought to be kind to animals, is because *they are God's creatures.*

This is true of all the animals. And this is what God teaches us when he says, "Every beast of the forest *is* mine, *and* the cattle upon a thousand hills" (Ps. 50:10). But we have the picture of a little bird before us, and so we shall speak especially of birds now. The birds are God's creatures because he made them, and he takes care of them. How beautifully our Saviour taught us this lesson in his sermon on the mount, when he said, "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them" (Matt. 6:26). And in another place he said: "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father" (Matt. 10:29).

God's Kitten.—Little Sally was a tender-hearted girl about eight years old. She had adopted the rule of which we are now speaking, and was always kind to the animals. One day she saw her brother Charley, who was older than she, teasing and worrying a little kitten. She stopped and watched him for awhile, and then said: "Charley, dear, how can you be so cruel to that poor kitten, when you know it is *God's kitten?*"

That statement of Sally had a great effect on her brother. He had never thought of that before. After that when tempted to be unkind to any animal, he remembered his sister's words, and said to

himself, "No, it's God's creature; I must not be unkind to it." And this is a good reason for being kind to animals. They are God's creatures.

2. The other reason for being kind to animals, is because *they are good teachers.*

It would be easy to fill a book with stories about the lessons taught us by the different animals. But we will speak of two lessons, among many, in which we may take the birds as our teachers.

(*a*) One is *the lesson of industry taught by birds.*

In some parts of Europe there is a bird which is called the *turnstone.* It gets this name from the way in which it obtains its food. This it does by turning over, with its strong beak, the stones on the sea-shore, and then picking up the insects that are under them.

One day a gentleman, as he walked along the shore on the coast of Scotland, saw two of these little birds trying to turn over a dead codfish. But the fish was ever so many times bigger than they were, and they found it a hard job. But they went bravely to work. They pushed, first with their bills and then with their breasts, yet in spite of their pushing, the fish would not turn over. Then they went round to the other side, and began to scrape away the sand from under the fish, so that it might be easier to turn him over. They then went back to the other side and pushed with all their might; but still the heavy fish would not

move. They tried again and again, but without success. Then they called another bird to help them. There were three of them now, and they tried and failed, and tried and failed, but never gave up, till finally over went the fish, and the persevering little creatures were successful. That is a valuable lesson for us all to learn.

(*b*) The other lesson is *the lesson of kindness.*

The walls of a country church in England were covered with ivy. In this a great many sparrows had built their nests. One day a poor, sick, and crippled sparrow fell from the nest to the ground. There it lay, fluttering and chirping on the grass, and trying in vain to get back to its nest. Several of the sparrows tried to lift the helpless bird back to its place by taking its wings in their beaks, but in vain. Then they seemed to hold a council together. Presently two of them flew away, and came back, after awhile, with a little twig about four inches long, and the eighth of an inch thick. They laid this down before the sick bird. It caught hold of one part with its beak, and of the other part with its feet, and then the other two birds each took hold of one end of the twig, and carried their sick friend back to its nest. How sweet this was! Who would hurt such little creatures? Let us be kind to the animals, *because they are God's creatures,* and *because they are good teachers.*

CHAPTER XLVIII.

COMING DOWN.

THE children in this picture have been playing with their swing. It was fastened to the limb of a tree; but the rope of which the swing was made has broken, and the boy, who was on it, has fallen to the ground. The look on the boy's face seems to show that he has hurt himself, and his sister is clasping her hands together as if she might be saying, "Oh, brother, I'm very sorry for you!" We have put the words "Coming Down" at the head of this article as its name or title. This is a very proper title. It expresses just what the picture represents.

And this title may very well suggest some thoughts that will be profitable to us. There are other ways of "*coming down*" besides that which this broken swing represents. We may speak of three different ways in which, from time to time, we see persons "*coming down.*"

1. The first of these is in the way of Providence. This we may call *the providential* "*coming down.*"

When we speak of the providence of God we mean by it the way in which he rules all things in heaven above and on the earth beneath. As we look around us we see wicked men going on in their evil ways. In doing this they often seem to feel as safe and secure as this boy felt in his swing till the rope broke and he came down; but sooner or later God is sure to bring them down. Like the boy in the swing, they have a fall and come down when they least expect it. Let us look at some illustrations of this providential "coming down."

(*a*) *Julian the Apostate* may be our first illustration. In the early days of Christianity there was a Roman emperor whose name was Julian. At one time he professed to be a Christian; but after awhile he gave up his profession of religion, and became what is called an apostate. He hated the cause of Christ, and resolved to use all his power to root it out of the world and destroy it. About that time the province of Persia rose up in rebellion against the government of Rome. Julian raised a large army and marched against Persia. He said, "I will go and subdue the Persians, and then I will come back and destroy the religion of Christ from among men." He went on his way; but in the very first battle with the Persians he fell mortally wounded. As his life's blood was flowing out from one of the wounds he called for a bowl.

The bowl was brought. He held it under the wound till it was full of blood; and then, gnashing his teeth with rage, he threw the blood from the bowl up towards heaven, saying as he did so, "Thou hast conquered, O thou Galilean!" Here we see indeed a providential "coming down."

(*b*) As another illustration of providential "coming down" we may take the case of William Tweed, of New York. He was a very famous man in his day. He was a very wicked and yet a very rich man. He was ready to do anything, no matter how wrong it was, if he could make money by it. He became one of the richest men in New York. He was familiarly called "Boss Tweed," because he had the control of so much in the city.

He thought himself perfectly secure in the position he occupied; and if any one spoke to him about his wicked ways, he would not deny that he was doing wrong, but would simply ask, "Well, what are you going to do about it?" He thought that no one could touch him in his high position of wrong-doing, and fancied himself entirely safe there. But at last the citizens of New York could bear it no longer. They rose up against him. The millions of money gotten by cheating he was compelled to give up. He was put in prison, and kept there till he died, in poverty and disgrace. This was another providential "coming down."

And every one who goes on in the way of wick-

edness is sure, sooner or later, to meet with some such providential "coming down," because, as David says, "*Verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.*"

2. But, in the second place, there is *a gracious way of "coming down"* as well as a providential way.

When we are led to see our sins and repent of them we come down to the foot of the cross and give ourselves to the service of God; and then from that humble position we are raised up to receive all the blessings of salvation. Let us look at some illustrations of this kind of "coming down."

(*a*) *Manasseh, king of Israel,* is our first illustration. He was a very wicked man. We read about him in 2 Kings 21 and 2 Chronicles 33. He led the people into idolatry, and set up idols in the house of God. He did worse than any of the kings that were before him. He made the people of Israel do worse than the nations around them. He shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another. And yet he felt himself safe in his evil ways. But at last the king of Babylon came and took him captive to that city. There he was put in prison. And while in prison there his heart was touched and softened by the grace of God. He was led to repentance, and became a new creature. Here indeed was a gracious "coming down." And after

this change took place he was released from prison. He went back to his throne and his kingdom, and became a comfort and a blessing to all the people of Israel.

(*b*) The *apostle Paul* is another example of this gracious "coming down." As we first hear of him, he was a hater and a persecutor of the infant Church of Christ. He was trying all he could to destroy it. In carrying out this bitter persecution, when on his way to Damascus he had a vision. Heaven was opened to his view. He saw Jesus seated at the right hand of God, and heard him speak. To his unspeakable astonishment he found that Jesus of Nazareth, whom he was persecuting in the person of his followers, was really the Son of God, sitting on the throne of heavenly glory. Then he fell to the earth. He repented of his sins, and became a true Christian. This was indeed a gracious "coming down." Then the persecutor became an apostle and a preacher. He went all round the world, telling of Jesus and his wondrous love. He wrote fourteen of the twenty-one epistles contained in the New Testament, and proved to be a greater blessing to the Church and to the world than any man who has ever lived from the time of our Saviour to the present time.

(*c*) We may take one other example of this gracious "coming down." We find this in the missionary field. When the Rev. Robert Moffat, the

well-known English missionary, was laboring in southern Africa there was a great chief in his neighborhood, whose name was Africaner. He was a very wicked man. He spent nearly all his time in fighting with the other tribes. He would go all about the country, burning villages, and either killing their inhabitants or else carrying them off to sell them as slaves. He was a terror to all the people in the country. When children were naughty their mothers would frighten them by threatening to bring Africaner to them. He was a curse to the whole country, and no one could control him. But at last it pleased God to visit him with his grace. His hard heart was softened. He was led to see how great his sins had been and to repent of them. He humbled himself at the foot of the cross, and became a true Christian. This was truly a gracious "coming down." And from this time Africaner became a changed man. He burned no more villages, he made no more slaves, he shed no more blood. He was humble and kind and loving and useful. He was a great help to the missionaries, and a comfort and a blessing wherever he went.

And I suppose that almost every church in our country could give us some illustrations of this gracious "coming down."

3. But there is also *a loving "coming down,"* about which I wish to say a few words.

There is only one illustration of this "coming down," and this we find in the person of our blessed Saviour. When he was on earth he said of himself, "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." This was the most wonderful "coming down" that ever has been heard of. It was the highest coming down to the lowest; it was the strongest coming down to the weakest; it was the richest coming down to the poorest. When Jesus was in heaven he knew nothing but honor and glory and joy and gladness; but when he came down to earth he knew little but shame and persecution and suffering and death. And yet he came down willingly, because he loved us, and because his "coming down" was to lift us up to all the blessedness and glory which he himself has in heaven. Then how we should thank him for his loving "coming down!" and how earnestly we should humble ourselves before him, and give ourselves to his service forever!

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